GMA accused of trying to cut deal with Marcoses

Story on PAGE A2

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Saturday, December 6, 2003 ★★ ~~82~~ 86 pages ~~10~~ 11 sections vol. 18 no. 361 P15

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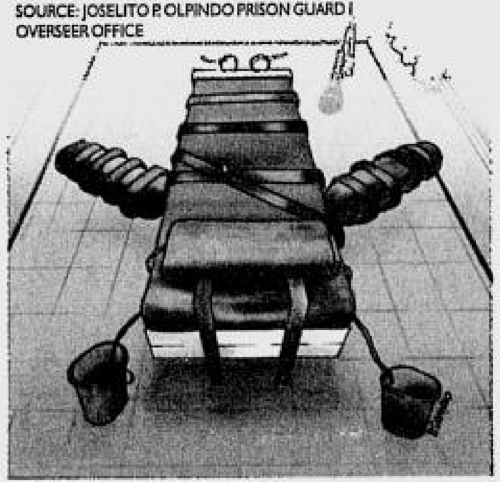
GMA lifts freeze on death penalty

AT A GLANCE

(As of November 2003

No. of Female Death Convicts	25
No. of Male Death Convicts	985
Total No. of death convicts	**1,010**
1. Executed by lethal injection	7
2. Executed by Electric Chair (up to the suspension of Death Penalty in 1987)	84
Foreigners Sentenced to Death (as of January 2000)	**13**
Kidnapping Cases	**144**
Male	132
Female (As of Nov 14, 2002)	12
Affirmed Death Prisoners	
Rape	76
Murder	13
Rape with murder	14
Kidnapping	25
Robbery with homicide	9
Kidnapping with rape	1
Robbery with rape	1
Drugs	4
Total (As of Sept. 1, 2003)	143
Grand Total	**981**

SOURCE: JOSELITO P. OLPINDO PRISON GUARD I OVERSEER OFFICE



Rapist-killer 1st in line for lethal injection

By Margaux C. Ortiz

BUREAU of Corrections chief Dionisio Santiago professed "mixed feelings" about the lifting of the moratorium on capital punishment. While the bureau has been preparing for the eventuality, he is saddened by the fact that a Filipino will be the first to meet his death next year.

The Filipino scheduled for execution on Jan. 30 was convicted of rape and homicide.

Santiago yesterday refused to provide details, and said he had to wait for the go-signal from Malacañang and the Department of Justice before releasing "confidential information."

"There are Chinese nationals convicted of trafficking tons of illegal drugs, but their execution has yet to be affirmed by the Supreme Court," Santiago told the INQUIRER. "It's hard to play God on your own *kababayan* (countryman)."

RAPIST-KILLER/ A8

'It's time to take a stand for the people'

IN WHAT an anti-death penalty advocate said was a "desperate attempt" to court the "Chinese elite" for support, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday announced that she was lifting the moratorium on all judicial executions.

"I shall no longer stand in the way of the executions scheduled by the courts for January," Ms Macapagal said at a press conference in Camp Crame. "Much as I am averse, as a matter of principle, to the taking of human lives, the President must yield to the higher public interest when dictated by extraordinary circumstances."

Anticipating a fallout, especially from the Church and "pro-life" groups, the President sought "understanding," saying it was time for her "to take a stand for the people."

Her announcement triggered a flurry of praise and criticism.

Joaquin Sy, president of the civic group Kaisa para sa Kaunlaran, said the Chinese-Filipino community lately plagued by kidnappings was "happy" about the development.

Kaisa is a member of the Chinese-Filipino peace and order coordinating council, and a prime-mover of the Citizens' Action Against Crime.

"We are taking this as an indication of the political will of the President," Sy said in a phone interview. "It's not only the community which believes that this is a deterrent to crime, but also the Department of Justice. This is an immediate solution to the rash of kidnappings. But we still believe that reforms are the long-term solutions."

But Rodolfo Diamante, executive director of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines' episcopal commission on prison pastoral care, said Ms Macapagal lifted the moratorium that she imposed

GMA/ A9

A GOLDEN moment for the Philippines at the SEA Games in Hanoi, Vietnam—the women's archery team wins a gold medal. The team is composed of Rachelle Anne Cabral (facing the camera), Jennifer Chan, Jazmin Figueroa and Joan Tabanag. EDWIN BACASMAS

RP bags golds in billiards, archery

By Ernesto Gonzales

HANOI—The Philippines finally nailed down the elusive first gold courtesy of the female archers Friday and added another in billiards after the 22nd Southeast Asian Games officially got going here.

The RP trio of Jennifer Chan, Jasmin Figueroa and Rachelle Anne Cabral outshot their Malaysian rivals in the finals, 218-211, and secured the women's team championship at the close of archery competitions at the National Sports Training Center.

As expected, Warren Kiamco and Lee Van Corteza delivered the gold in the 9-ball pool doubles in billiards at Ho Chi Minh, blasting Indonesians Muhamad Junarto and Nurdin, 9-3.

Kiamco and Corteza had earlier ousted Vietnam's Nguyen Phuc Long and Nguyen Than Nam, 9-5, in the semifinals.

The victories proved a big consolation for the Filipinos after the men's archery team, which had looked like potential gold medalists after topping the eliminations, floundered in the semifinals and settled for the bronze.

RP BAGS/ A8

Gov't calls in Marines in anti-kidnap campaign

By Christian V. Esguerra

POLICE rescued businessman Jose Naga from suspected members of the notorious Waray kidnap group in a bloody encounter yesterday afternoon.

But despite the string of recent victories, the government is still stepping up its anti-kidnapping campaign—literally—by calling in the Marines.

Beginning Monday, at least 260 military officers will back regular police units in patrolling and manning checkpoints in crime-prone areas in Metro Manila, the chief of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (NAKTF) told reporters.

A beaming President Macapagal-Arroyo profusely congratulated NAKTF chief Angelo Reyes for the arrest earlier of the fourth and fifth most wanted kidnap-for-ransom syndicate leaders.

"I am not vowing that we will have a kidnap-free Christmas (but) there are things that must be done if we want a kidnap-free Christmas," Ms Macapagal said in a press briefing.

Reyes said members of the Army's 80th Infantry Brigade and the Marines would be deployed to help policemen "pound the beat" in Metro Manila beginning next week.

He said these soldiers would undergo training in police work during the weekend.

The deployment would be part of a three-point security plan, which includes the setting up of checkpoints and mobile police stations all over Metro Manila, Reyes said.

Police and their military backup, he said,

GOV'T/ A21

RESCUED kidnap victim, Jose Naga, grabs the President in a burst of gratitude at Camp Crame where he was reunited with his family. VAL HANDUMON

GMA brokers truce in PNP discord

By Christian V. Esguerra and Juliet L. Javellana

LIKE TWO long-lost brothers, PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and Director Eduardo Matillano, dismissed chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, yesterday buried the hatchet in dramatic fashion—right in front of a beaming President, other top officials including anti-kidnapping czar Angelo Reyes and, not by chance, members of the media.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had just left the press conference on Reyes' recent successes against kidnap gangs when she returned to the conference room, escorting Matillano toward Ebdane.

The two top Philippine National Police officials then shook hands and embraced one another, a sight that was next to impossible only the other day when Matillano went public and demanded

GMA/ A21

Ping or FPJ: Erap faces tough choice

By Christine O. Avendaño and Armand N. Nocum

THE PROBLEM of the divided opposition has now fallen squarely on the lap of ousted President Joseph Estrada. The de facto leader of the anti-Macapagal forces has been asked to choose: Who should be requested to drop out of the presidential race, Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson or actor Fernando Poe Jr.?

Lacson said he met Thursday night with Estrada to tell him that he was determined about his presidential bid and that he was the man to support in the May election.

In previous interviews, Estrada had made it clear he would never allow two opposition candidates to run for office, but maintained that Poe—his friend and political supporter for years—should be the opposition's standard-bearer.

Asked before the Lacson visit whether

PING/ A21

WOW! ALA PACQUIAO!

Prosecutor floors Abu suspect with wicked uppercut

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ISABELA CITY, Basilan—A quick-thinking state prosecutor did a Manny Pacquiao last Tuesday when he knocked down a suspected Abu Sayyaf bandit who tried to wrestle away the M16 rifle of a jail guard after a court hearing.

Western Mindanao Assistant Regional Prosecutor Ricardo Cabaron floored Mubin Ibba with an upper

PROSECUTOR/ A8

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The entire archipelago will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly over the Eastern sections.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/12/06/03

GMA, Marcoses cutting a deal?

By Dona Pazzibugan

A GROUP of Marcos rights abuse victims has accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of attempting to enter into a settlement with the heirs of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos over the forfeited $683 million Marcos Swiss deposits.

Selda, whose members are claiming part of the money, said it has obtained a copy of a memorandum from Hawaii District Court Judge Manuel Real in which the US judge said Ms Macapagal was amenable to a settlement as a solution to the competing claims between the government, the Marcos rights victims and the heirs of the dictator.

Ms Macapagal told US President George W. Bush so during his visit here last Oct. 18, according to Real's Nov. 20 memorandum, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER.

"It's very apparent she's [the President] concocting a deal. She's back-stabbing the victims. She never wanted to give justice to the victims," Selda secretary-general Marie Hilao-Enriquez said in a phone interview.

"She's sold the Philippines to Bush, now she's even selling the victims. She should be trashed, she's a traitor," said a furious Hilao-Enriquez.

REACTING to Selda's allegations, the President's chief of staff, Rigoberto Tiglao, said last night: "There is no such plan and Selda would be the last group to have such information. The Marcos case is with the courts and as a former detainee I hope Selda does not exploit this issue for their own agenda. The President has allocated part of the money for the human rights victims. Let's not politicize this issue for some agenda for seizing the state."

Selda represents majority of about 10,000 Marcos rights abuse victims who won a $2 billion judgment from Real's court in 1993 against the Marcos estate.

To enforce the ruling, Real approved a $150 million settlement concluded in 1999 during the Estrada administration between lawyers of the Marcoses and a group of rights victims that broke away from the original group that filed the class suit. This was shot down by the Supreme Court.

Real has since tried to block the efforts of the Philippine government to get hold of the $683 million now held in escrow at the Philippine National Bank.

Last Sept. 2, Real issued a global injunction ordering all banks holding Marcos assets not to transfer the money to the Philippine government, following a Supreme Court decision in July declaring the Marcos assets ill-gotten and forfeiting the funds in favor of the government.

In his memorandum dated Nov. 20, 2003, Real ordered the lawyers of the Marcoses, the martial law victims-claimants and the Philippine government to undergo "mediation" to settle their claims over the recovered Marcos assets.

"I believe this to be a solution to the many problems involving litigation before this court concerning Marcos assets," Real wrote.

"I am also advised that the President of the Philippines would be amenable to such a solution when she discussed Philippine problems with President Bush," he added.

The Supreme Court on Nov. 18 ruled "with finality" that the $683 million Marcos funds were ill-gotten and belonged to the Philippine government.

The ruling, which affirmed the tribunal's earlier July 15 decision, should have paved the way for the transfer of the funds to the National Treasury, but Imelda Marcos, the dictator's widow, filed the other day a second motion for reconsideration with the high court which had junked an earlier appeal from the Marcoses.

The Macapagal administration has vowed to uphold the high court's ruling as well as its commitment to the Swiss government to compensate the rights victims from the recovered assets. A compensation bill that would set aside P10 billion from the forfeited funds for the victims is now being debated in Congress.

Hilao-Enriquez said Imelda's second motion for reconsideration, which is prohibited by the courts, was a "delaying tactic" and was meant to make way for the mediation ordered by Real.

"This is the reason the Marcoses are confident [about their appeal]," said Hilao-Enriquez.

Selda also provided the INQUIRER with a copy of the Nov. 5, 2003 letter of US Treasury General Counsel David D. Authanser advising Real to pursue mediation.

Real had apparently written the US Treasury Department on Sept. 2, 2003 to get its nod to his proposed mediation.

"The [Bush] Administration has a continuing interest in the prompt resolution of conflicting claims to assets by ""kleptocrats"of dubious regimes," wrote Authanser.

"Perhaps the best way to proceed is to urge all parties to submit to mediation pursuant to the [US] 9th Circuit rules," Authanser added.

Earlier this year, Real attempted to resurrect the aborted $150 million settlement deal entered into by the Estrada administration with the Marcos heirs and a group of claimants represented by US lawyer Robert Swift.

The settlement, which Selda has opposed, would have given the rights victims $150 million as settlement, but the Marcoses would have been absolved of all crimes committed during martial law.

Real said he was reinstating the settlement which he approved on April 29, 1999 which he said the Philippine government had reneged against.

The memorandum was part of Real's Sept. 2 order blocking the transfer of the $683 million ill-gotten Marcos Swiss deposits to the Philippine government.

Court keeps Imelda's P140,000 travel bond

THE WIDOW of dictator Ferdinand Marcos has forfeited a 140,000 peso travel bond as punishment for returning late from a sanctioned foreign trip, the Sandiganbayan ruled yesterday.

The anti-graft court—where Imelda Marcos faces at least 38 civil and criminal charges—had approved a one-month trip for eye treatment in the United States, and pilgrimages to France, Portugal and Rome.

She was told to return Oct. 26, but arrived in Manila 18 days later. She also went to Britain without court permission.

In its ruling, the court said it would keep the bond because Marcos failed to "strictly and faithfully abide by all her undertakings" under a resolution granting her travel permission. She would have gotten back the money had she returned as scheduled.

The court, however, said it was not necessary to cite her for contempt, issue a warrant for her arrest or cancel her bail bond, as demanded by prosecutors.

The 74-year-old former first lady filed a medical report to the court a day after she returned on Nov. 12.

Marcos said she stopped in London to have doctors check on a painful knee and her failing eyes. She said doctors have been carefully calibrating her dosage of steroids, and that mistakes could leave her blind.

She showed journalists her bandage-covered left knee, which she said might require surgery.

AP

Is 'Atong' going to testify vs Erap?

By Armand N. Nocum

IS THE government planning to turn Charlie "Atong" Ang into a state witness against his erstwhile patron, ousted President Joseph Estrada?

Government prosecutors kept mum on the case, but one of Estrada's court-appointed lawyers believes there are efforts toward this end.

Estrada lawyer Noel Malaya, however, was quick to point out the futility of such a plan.

"Good luck *na lang. Nag-i-ilusyon lang sila* (They are laboring under an illusion)," Malaya said.

Ang faces near-certain extradition after the Nevada District Court removed all legal obstacles to a hearing to return him to the Philippines. Ang is facing plunder charges along with Estrada.

Ang, 45, stands accused of funneling P130 million in tobacco excise taxes and P540 million in illegal gambling payoffs to Estrada. Plunder is a non-bailable offense punishable by death.

Malaya said he doubted Ang could present evidence to show the money had gone to Estrada, saying the paper trail led only to Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, who eventually blew the whistle on the alleged kickbacks.

"Chavit is claiming the money went to Ang. But how can that be when the one who got, prepared and cashed the [checks] was Chavit?" Malaya said.

Malaya said Ang's testimony "will not help the prosecution of the case against (Estrada) at all because they have no direct evidence against my client."

While laughing off the reports the government was trying to get Ang to turn against Estrada, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said they just want Ang to "admit" to the evidence already presented against Estrada in his plunder trial before the Sandiganbayan.

If this happens, he said, then the two-year-old Estrada trial before the anti-graft court would not continue to drag on.

If Ang would not agree, Villa-Ignacio said, the trial would be set back several months as they would have to present evidence anew, a process already completed earlier this year.

He was optimistic the government has a strong case against Estrada and Ang, saying that even the US court affirmed this when it decided to pave the way for an extradition hearing for Ang.

The US, for its part, has lauded the Las Vegas court's ruling on the Ang case.

In a statement, the US Embassy in Manila yesterday said the ruling against Ang was the result of bilateral cooperation under the US-RP Treaty on Extradition.

"The ruling demonstrates clearly the bilateral treaty on extradition is an effective law enforcement tool that works to the mutual benefit of both the US and the Philippines," the statement said.

But the US also warned that "it would be premature... to speculate on the final outcome of this extradition case.

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Int'l press group airs alarm over radioman's slay

BRUSSELS—The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) expressed extreme concern Thursday over the murder of a Philippine journalist and demanded tougher action from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In an open letter to Ms Macapagal, the Brussels-based group said "the situation in the Philippines is out of control and (should) be treated with the highest level of concern." Nelson Nadura was gunned down in Masbate City on Tuesday.

Ms Macapagal vowed to punish those behind the murder.

The IFJ called on the Macapagal administration "to make a commitment to press freedom and to ensure the safety of all journalists working in the Philippines" by launching a full investigation into Nadura's death.

"There is no worse form of censorship than violence. It is essential that journalists are free from threats of violence and allowed to work in an environment free from fear," the group said. *AFP*

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MONOPOLY IS ALSO A CORRUPTION

After painstaking efforts to obtain redress within the PNP administrative machinery, our clamor for the equitable distribution of opportunities within the police force fell on deaf ears. The monopoly within the PNP has already been brought to the attention of the Chief, PNP, the NAPOLCOM and the office of the Presidential Adviser for Police Affairs. It has therefore become imperative that we seek your Excellency President Gloria Macapagal- Arroyo's most honored intervention on this issue.

If today the dedicated and dignified among us have shifted from monastic silence into an active campaign, there should be no wonder. Something has gone dangerously wrong with the institution that is the Philippine National Police. It has been brazenly, shamelessly and fearlessly corrupted. The tunnel is too deep and too strongly protected for any shaft of new light.

The PNP corps of police commissioned officers is composed of those who are graduates of the Philippine Military Academy, Philippine National Police Academy and those who did not graduate from either. The PMAyers are a minority of 6% in every way the count goes. The numerous majority of 94% constitutes the latter. Any need to figure out the difference only makes it sharper.

Despite our ranks and qualifications, we are not recognized for positions of leadership. Only PMAyers are.

Despite our outstanding credentials and track records, we have always been relegated to the background.

Despite our integrity and fidelity to the chain of command, we are not afforded equal opportunities.
Only PMAyers are.

The blessed children of heaven have it all. Why the monopoly of a few PMAyers to the detriment of the majority who have always adhered to principles of justice, integrity and professionalism. We can only suffer in silence in the selective application or violation of laws, rules and regulations to the suit their vested interest.

Is it because of the *mistah* culture, which has metamorphosed into a mafia? Maybe.

Is it because of the *bata-bata* system, which has become a syndrome wothout cure? Perhaps.

We know the answer. It is both.

Look at the distribution of key positions in the PNP today. It looks like pork barrel - from Chief, PNP to the Command Group and Directorial Staff down to the Police Regional Offices. *Sila lang ba ang PNP*?

PMAyers lord it all in the twenty-two (22) National Support Units except for four (4) units. At the regional police offices, only Regions 7, 8, 12, Caraga and ARMM remain outside the PMA monopoly. Even the PNP Health Service is in the hands of their *mistah* whose profession is anything but health service.

Look, what is happening to our P.N.P., Madame President? Is this not one of the inevitable consequences of PMAyer monopoly?

It is all bad leadership, Madame President. If the key positions in the PNP remain to be a permanent PMAyer domain, discontent will grow into resentment, resentment into enmity, and enmity into hostility. We know it. We feel it.

Madame President, if the PNP cannot save the numerous and qualified majority who are non-PMAyers, it will not be able to save the PMAyers, who are a minority. We are afraid we can not be more articulate.

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GMA or Roco? LP split

By Carlito Pablo

THE LIBERAL Party is divided on whom to support between incumbent President Macapagal-Arroyo and Alliance of Hope standard bearer Raul Roco in the 2004 presidential elections.

"We're split right in the middle," a top-ranking LP official said. "It's either GMA or Roco."

The LP leader, who requested anonymity, said that Liberals were scheduled to hold a crucial meeting Friday night to approve the party's selection framework which will serve as basis for choosing the party's favored candidate.

The draft framework seeks to, among others, ascertain the candidates' position vis-a-vis controversial issues like the ill-gotten Marcos wealth, the coconut levy, the Kuratong Baleleng rubout case and the pending plunder case against ousted President Joseph Estrada.

These provisions in LP's draft framework will make it difficult for other presidential aspirants like movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. and Sen. Panfilo Lacson to merit LP's endorsement.

Lacson has been tagged as the principal respondent in the May 1995 alleged summary execution of Kuratong Baleleng gang members. He also served as police chief during the Estrada administration.

On the other hand, Poe is a close associate of the Marcoses and a friend of Estrada.

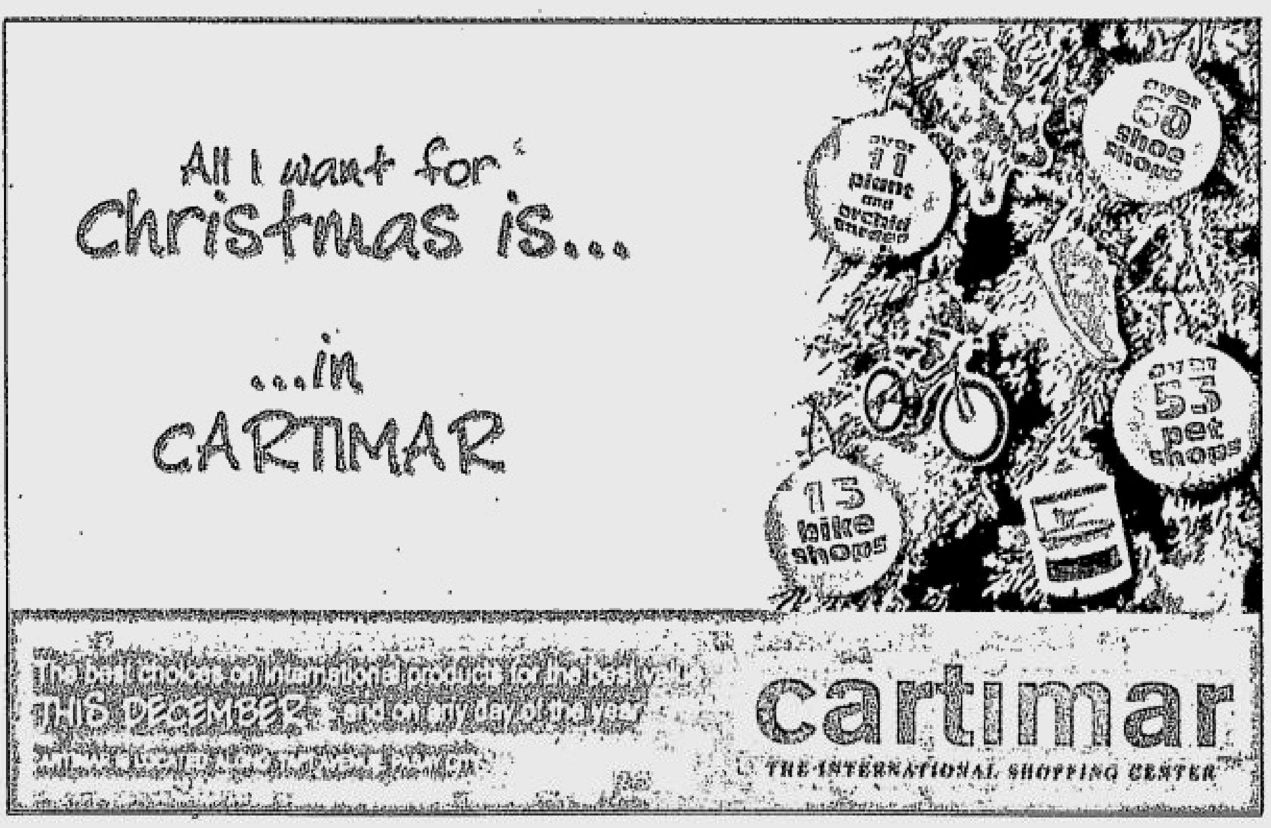
The draft framework, which was set to be tackled last night, is anchored on LP's advocacy for continuing social reforms and the strengthening of democratic institutions.

The framework notes that the choice of candidate must not be solely based on "sheer popularity and winnability," although it acknowledges that these factors are also important.

When sought for comment, LP President Florencio Abad (Batanes) said the party has not crossed out yet any of the declared presidential candidates on its list.

Abad said that after Friday's meeting, the LP will hold talks with presidential aspirants to help the party determine who it will support in 2004.

Two LP members are in President Macapagal's Cabinet: Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas and housing chief Michael Defensor, who is also the President's campaign spokesperson.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Boxing, dirty politics, guns not for the Common Good

By Volt Contreras

BOXING hero Manny Pacquiao will not be rooting for this aspiring political party.

Aside from opposing the congressional pork barrel system and the death penalty, the Alliance for the Common Good, a movement led by gun control advocate Reynaldo "Nandy" Pacheco and lawyer Mario Ongkiko, is against any form of "institutionalized violence," including the sport of boxing.

This was part of the platform that the alliance, which also calls itself Kapatiran, presented at a press conference at the Club Filipino yesterday.

Only the day before, the group filed a petition with the Commission on Elections asking to be recognized as a party so it can participate in the 2004 elections.

Pacheco said the movement, launched in August 2002, will be offering an "alternative" for voters seeking an end to the country's "dirty politics" and the "structures that glorify guns, sex, the culture of death and violence, dishonesty, vice, materialism and hedonism."

"The party is categorical in its stand against the pork barrel, gambling, the death penalty, the use of torture to extract confession, violence in school fraternities and other institutions, as well as sports whose main aim is to inflict physical harm on the opponent," Pacheco, the Kapatiran president, said in a speech.

At the open forum, Pacheco and Ongkiko said they lumped boxing with the "violent sports" they object to because "the objective there is to beat up and knock down your opponent."

But Pacheco conceded being on "lonely ground" on the issue, noting how the country's leaders from the President down congratulated Pacquiao for his spectacular, underdog victory over a Mexican world titlist last month.

Ongkiko, the group's chair, said that while boxing may be popular in Mexico because of the world champions it has produced, the public hardly hears of the many more aspiring pugilists who have sunk into poverty and misery after being maimed in the ring.

In its party platform submitted to the Comelec, the group said it was also against "unwholesome" practices like allowing public officials to double as entertainers, media personalities or commercial endorsers; and of putting up billboards claiming this and that official as being responsible for government projects.

It also called for an end to the practice of appointing former military officers to head the defense department.

The group seeks an amendment to the Senior Citizens Law by scrapping the requirement that an applicant for benefits under the law must have an annual income of not more than P60,000.

"Meeting the age requirement of 60 is enough" for one to receive such benefits as discounts on medicines, transportation and others, said Pacheco.

The movement's platform asks that elected or appointed officials follow a strict moral code and adopt pacifist, prolife policies, quoting occasionally from the Bible.

The group's foreign policy espouses progressive disarmament, and envisions the country as "a nation that is a friend to all and enemy to none."

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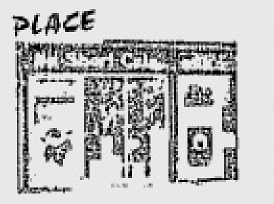

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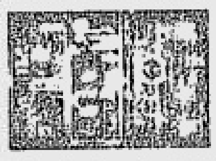

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They're all alike, says CPP on '04 candidates

LUCENA CITY—After earlier conceding that a win by action star Fernando Poe Jr. in the May 2004 elections is inevitable, the Communist Party of the Philippines yesterday declared that it sees no hope for the country from among those aspiring for the highest position in the land.

Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, CPP spokesperson, yesterday said there was no essential difference among those who have declared their intention to run for president in next year's polls.

"Widespread cynicism over the elections is driving more and more people to tread the path of revolution," Rosal said in a statement released by the Party Information Bureau.

Aside from incumbent President Macapagal-Arroyo, those who have already declared their presidential candidacy were former Sen. Raul Roco, movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. and opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Rosal noted that the platforms the candidates have presented, as well as their actual records and actions, "manifest the absence of any relevant difference among the various reactionary candidates and their political parties."

"And that includes FPJ. Even with his deafening silence on what kind his government will be if elected, the traditional politicians behind him are glaring manifestations that FPJ will be of the same mold and implement the same anti-people policies," Rosal told the INQUIRER in a mobile phone interview.

In his statement, Rosal said there's no exception among the candidates, since they all favor the opening up of the economy in favor of "globalization," neo-liberalization, deregulation, privatization and denationalization, and the surrender of the national patrimony and granting of privileges to foreign capitalists." *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Second House seat for Buhay party-list group

WITH BARELY six months to go before the next elections, the Supreme Court has given a party-list group with links to Bro. Mike Velarde's El Shaddai movement another seat in Congress.

In a four-page resolution penned by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., the tribunal ruled that the party-list group Buhay Hayaang Yumabong (Buhay) was entitled to a second seat in the House of Representatives.

Accordingly, the high court ordered the Commission on Elections to proclaim Buhay's second nominee. Its first nominee, Rene, a son of Velarde's, recently took his party-list seat in Congress.

The court said Buhay had obtained more than 4 percent of the total number of votes cast in the last party-list elections and more than half a percent for additional seats, like other party-list groups. *Philip C. Tubeza*

US exec sees peace in South in 2 years

By Joel B. Escovilla
PDI Mindanao Bureau
and TJ Burgonio

DAVAO CITY—A peace agreement with the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front could be signed in the next two years, a United States development aid official said yesterday.

"I think it's going to happen, I'm very positive," said John Dalton, deputy chief of party of the Growth with Equity in Mindanao, a development agency funded by the US Aid for International Development (USAID).

Dalton, who issued the statement in the wake of reports that formal peace talks between the government and the MILF could take place in Kuala Lumpur as early as January, said that in anticipation of the peace agreement, the USAID has set aside US$30 million for financial and technical assistance to MILF members.

He said that once a peace accord is signed, Mindanao will be the focus of development efforts from the inflow of investments and aid.

The MILF yesterday insisted on a complete withdrawal of military troops from the Buliok complex, its captured stronghold in central Mindanao, before formal talks can resume.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu stressed that a complete withdrawal as well as the dropping of criminal charges against MILF leaders were some of the conditions the MILF set during a series of exploratory meetings.

"What's in the agreement must be complied with. Otherwise, even the smallest agreements cannot be implemented," he said in a phone interview.

Foreign Secretary Blas Ople has said that formal talks would resume on the first week of January. He said the military was willing to withdraw as far as 1.5 kms from the Buliok complex, the main MILF camp straddling the provinces of Cotabato, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao until it was overrun by government troops last February.

He did not mention the other condition, the dropping of charges against top MILF leaders who were tagged in the rash of bomb attacks in Mindanao in March and April that left 38 people dead.

Kabalu said a partial withdrawal was "not worth it."

Dalton said the programs to be funded by USAID money would be patterned "after the very successful program of GEM for the Moro National Liberation Front started in 1997."

After the signing of the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF, GEM implemented the Emergency Livelihood Assistance Program (ELAP), followed by a sequel called the Livelihood Enhancement and Peace (LEAP) program.

While ELAP concentrated on the immediate rehabilitation of MNLF communities through grants and aid, LEAP brought in technology transfer and farming techniques.

Dalton said that even as the funds have already been earmarked for the anticipated peace deal with the MILF, they will remain untouched until the agreement is signed.

The MILF said it was willing to sign a peace accord "if the instrument could provide [a] solution to the Bangsamoro's quest for self-determination."

But Kabalu accused the government of being insincere about pursuing peace.

He cited recent pronouncements from government officials, including that of President Macapagal-Arroyo, that the government was ready to sacrifice the peace talks to advance its anti-terror campaign.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, December 6, 2003
1st Week of Advent

1st Reading:	Is 30:19-21, 23-26
Gospel:	Mt 9:35-10:1, 6-8

Jesus went around all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom, and he cured every sickness and disease. When he saw the crowds he was moved with pity, for they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the workers are only few. Ask the master of the harvest to send workers to gather his harvest."

Then he called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority over the unclean spirits to drive them out and to heal every disease and sickness.

"Go instead to the lost sheep of the people of Israel.

"Go and proclaim this message: The kingdom of heaven is near. Heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, cleanse the lepers, and drive out demons. You received this as a gift, so give it as a gift."

Commentary

The itinerant nature of Jesus ministry is going from one place to another proclaiming the good news of God's reign. In the process of insertion and immersion, he discovered the people's concerns and problems. The teaching of Jesus is not devoid of content. It is deeply rooted in the people's conditions and hard realities. Jesus' teaching and preaching ministries go hand in hand with health and organization. Jesus heals them and realizes that more laborers are needed to make the announcement of the reign of God.

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- Acne Treatment and Control
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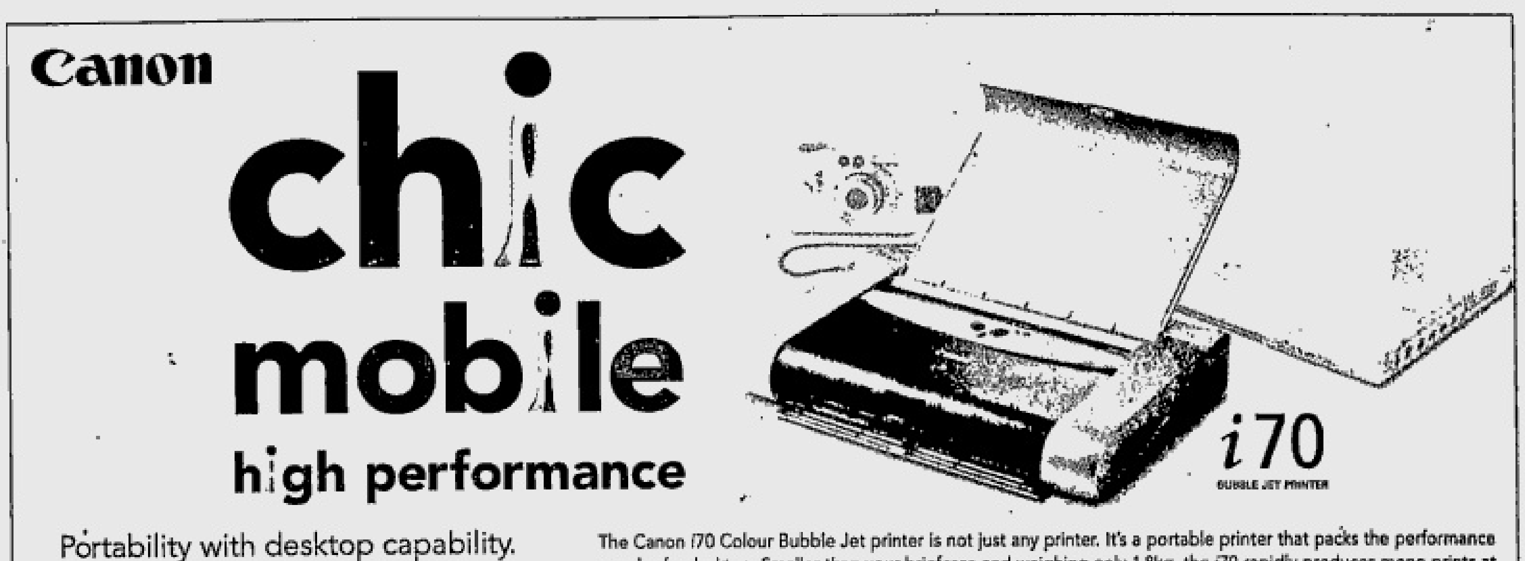

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RP bags golds in billiards, archery

From page A1

Counting an earlier bronze by top male archer Florante Matan in the men's individual event, the Filipinos proceeded to the opening ceremony late in the day at the National Stadium brimming with pride and confidence as the No. 2 nation so far.

With the billiards gold, the Filipinos posted a 2-0-3 gold-silver-bronze output behind Malaysia which had a 2-3-0 tally. Indonesia was third at 1-2-2 followed by Thailand at 1-0-1, Vietnam at 1-0-0 and Singapore at 0-2-0.

The Filipinos also created a lot of stir in rowing by sending seven of eight entries into Saturday's finals. Chess also hoped to contribute its own share of golds as its top bets reached the semifinals of individual rapid play.

"*Para sa kababayan natin ito* (This is for our countrymen)," declared Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit, who rushed to the archery venue upon learning of the Filipinos' triumph along with IOC representative Frank Elizalde.

"This is a good start for the Philippines," said Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain. "This is quite unusual because it came before the opening ceremonies."

He said President Macapagal-Arroyo has been informed of the gold medal and added she has sent her congratulations and told the athletes to keep up the good work.

The RP archers, third in the eliminations, easily hurdled Thailand, 230-195, in the quarterfinals then had to dig deep against top-seed Indonesia before pulling through, 226-224, in the semifinals.

The effort against the Indons must have drained their energy as the Filipinos took some time to recover their bearings against the Malaysians, who took the lead in the first two of the four shooting sessions, 145-139.

But Figueroa shot 28 points, Chan added a 27 and Cabral fired a 24 that allowed the Filipinas to wrest the lead in the third and then stood their ground in the last frame to win by seven points.

Their male counterparts, led by Matan, couldn't summon their old fire in the semifinals against Malaysia and bowed out, 244-231. In the shootoff for the bronze with Thailand, the Filipinos finally prevailed, 236-218.

The 1-gold, 2-bronze performance was a lot better than archery's output of a single gold in Malaysia two years ago through Purita Joy Marino, who failed to join the team this time due to an injury.

Mark Jason Melligen joined three boxing teammates into the semifinals by outclassing Cambodia's Chan Samrith in the 64-kg division. The other semifinalists are Juanito Magliquian, Chris Camat and Florencio Ferrer.

In chess, woman international master Beverly Mendoza reached the semifinal at the expense of WIM Christine Rose Mariano while GM Joey Antonio and IM Mark Paragua were battling for semifinal slots.

The Filipinos advanced five entries into the bodybuilding finals, assured themselves of a bronze in water polo and women's lawn tennis but were overpowered by Thailand in women's volleyball, 25-20, 25-17, 25-9. The women's gymnastics team finished fourth.

Thailand relegated RP to third place in water polo with a 9-7 win.

Czarina Mae Arevalo and Anna Patricia Santos combined to give RP a 3-0 rout of Myanmar in the quarterfinals of women's tennis but the men's team was bundled out by Indonesia. 3-0.

Alvin Amposta and Nestor Cordova gun for the light men's pair today in rowing along with Jose Rodriguez in the light men's single scull.

Spearheaded by defending champions Gretchen Malalad and Jose Mari Pabillore, the Filipinos shoot for the team kumite titles in karatedo. The team kata gold in both divisions is also up for grabs.

Adora Aquino, a top gold prospect in the 48-kg division, gets going. against Y. H. Thawng Luai of Myanmar while Junel Perania faces Vu Quoc Huy of Vietnam in the 70-kg class.

The shooters also join the fray with Gilbert Escobar, Carolino Gonzales and Marcelo Gonzales competing in the 10-meter air pistol, 60 shots and Therese Cantada and Susan Aguado taking part in the 25-m sports pistol.

Swimming starts with heats in women's 100 freestyle and 200 IM, men's 400 IM and men's and women's 200 backstroke.

IT'S A bulls-eye for Jennifer Chan and the Philippine ladies archery team. EDWIN BACASMAS

Rapist-killer may be first . . .

From page A1

There are nine Chinese drug lords on death row, he said.

According to Santiago, bureau personnel have started preparing the lethal injection chamber. He said the bureau had a supply of chemicals sufficient for four executions.

"I am pro-life, but what good is it to preserve one life if it endangers the lives of many?" he said.

In all, the execution of 165 convicts has been affirmed by the Supreme Court.

Deterrent

Explaining the legal process, Santiago said that once the high court affirms an execution, the lower court sets a date for the execution to be carried out.

He said that, however, Malacañang had the final say on whether a convict died—or lived.

Dante Jimenez, founding chair of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, was pleased at the lifting of the moratorium on capital punishment.

"We are happy that President Macapagal-Arroyo has finally realized the death penalty's importance in deterring crimes," he said in a phone interview.

Jimenez pointed out that the death penalty should be judiciously and consistently applied "even beyond the election period."

He said the VACC would hold a covenant-signing with presidential and vice presidential candidates on Dec. 17 to ensure that they would not postpone executions, especially in cases involving heinous crimes.

Prosecutor floors Abu suspect

From page A1

cut although the latter was taller and better built than he.

Ibba is facing charges in connection with the Aug. 8, 2001 beheading of nine residents of Balobo village.

The hearing had just ended at 11:45 a.m. when Ibba tried to grab the rifle slung on the shoulder of warden Jumaril Salih. The warden was putting handcuffs on Ibba.

Hit hard

As Ibba and Salih grappled for the firearm, Cabaron, who was standing next to them, punched the suspected Abu Sayyaf member. The punch the 5'6" average-built prosecutor threw was so hard that the 5'8" muscular Ibba fell on his back.

More than 40 people, including 17 other Abu Sayyaf suspects and 12 jail guards, were in the courtroom when the incident happened.

The crowd was initially shocked but later applauded when it realized that the 45-year-old Cabaron had succeeded in subduing Ibba.

The other suspected Abu Sayyaf members remained calm throughout the incident.

Cabaron told the INQUIRER that Ibba was determined to take Salih's rifle and people inside the courtroom could have been killed as a result. He said he believed Ibba had coordinated his action with the other suspects because some of their relatives who regularly attended hearings were conspicuously absent on Tuesday.

Judge Danilo Bucoy said it was possible the incident would be repeated unless stricter security measures were implemented.

Senior Supt. Bensali Jabarani, Basilan police chief, assured him that more policemen would be deployed in the next hearings.

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GMA lifts freeze …

From page A1

on Sept. 30, 2002, because she needed the Chinese-Filipino's community's financial support for her election run in 2004.

"It's about the elections," Dimante said in a phone interview. "What else can it be? She is the perfect example of a politician succumbing to pressure from a group from whom she needs assistance."

At the same press conference, Angelo Reyes, chief of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, said the President's decision ensured the certainty of punishment that, he claimed, was the principal deterrent to crime.

No choice

Donald Dee, president of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop), welcomed Ms Macapagal's move, saying she had "no choice" but to enforce the law.

Dee told reporters that Ms Macapagal announced the lifting of the moratorium the other day during a meeting with various groups, including Ecop.

He expressed the hope that this would serve as a warning to kidnap-for-ransom groups.

Turn-around

Only 11 days earlier, the President had declared that capital punishment was not a deterrent to kidnapping and other heinous crimes.

"We have had executions in the past and these have provided a steam valve to vent the public's ire against hardened criminals. But these executions did not stop heinous crime," she said in a statement on Nov. 25.

"Executions may give us some form of emotional release and a transient sense of retribution and security, but the more effective solutions lie in fielding the entire criminal justice system against criminals, so that we can effectively curb kidnapping, robbery, murder or rape."

But yesterday she said: "The pain of victims of heinous crimes has spread all over the national community and I shall not turn my back against the cry for just retribution under the law."

Triumph

Sen. Robert Barbers of the ruling Lakas-CMD hailed the President's decision as a "triumph of justice" and a "triumph of victims of heinous crimes."

Barbers said the resumption of state executions in January showed Ms Macapagal's desire to stamp out the criminality that, he pointed out, has greatly affected the administration's economic programs.

But Senate President Franklin Drilon said lifting the moratorium was but a "quick fix" to the resurgence of kidnapping and other organized crimes.

Drilon warned that unless the government implemented major reforms in the enforcement, prosecution and judicial systems, the death penalty would not solve the country's peace and order problems.

What about the boss?

Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda said the President's move would be effective only if the crime kingpins themselves were made to pay for their "debts to society."

"The underlings of the crime world are the ones mostly paraded at press conferences, while their bosses happily go on with their evil schemes," Legarda said. "These underlings are replaced as quickly as they are caught or neutralized by the police."

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said it would take a "comprehensive approach, one that addresses the issues of law and order, poverty reduction and the general quality of life of our people," to solve criminality.

"Time and again, we have seen that the death penalty does not address rising criminality," Pangilinan said, adding:

"Lifting the moratorium is a stop-gap measure. While we sympathize with victims of crime, we do so with the end in view that the solution to rising criminality isn't imposing the death penalty but ensuring reforms that will lead to a more efficient police and justice system."

Lawyer Theodore Te, coordinator for Metro Manila of the Free Legal Assistance Group that provides *pro bono* (free) services to convicts on death row, said "the right to life cannot and should not be placed on the altar of politics."

"This the President did when she announced that she would not stand in the way of the implementation of the death penalty in January of 2004—an election year no less," Te said in a statement.

He also said the President "cannot proclaim that she is morally opposed to any measure that takes life and, at the same time, stand by while blood stains her hands."

Being political

"That is, to put it charitably, hypocritical; it is, to put it bluntly, being political," he added.

"So what else is new?" said the CBCP's Diamante. "She is a consistent vacillator—always vacillating between her conscience and her constituents. What can you expect from a leader who cannot stand her ground?"

But Director Ricardo de Leon of the National Capital Region Police Office said lifting the moratorium on the death penalty was a "good way" to deter criminals.

Northern Police District Director Marcelino Franco also said the move would serve to test the effectiveness of capital punishment as a deterrent.

Flip-flop

Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, principal author of the proposed law abolishing the death penalty pending in the House, called on the President to stop "flip-flopping" on the issue.

"Why the sudden change [in her position]?" Rosales said. "My message to the President is she should not be flip-flopping because there's no reason for her now to change her mind from two years ago."

Rosales said only the revamp and upgrading of the law enforcement agencies involved in anti-kidnapping operations would help solve the problem.

She also said people were beginning to suspect that Ms Macapagal lifted the moratorium just to win over the Chinese-Filipino community, and "give her more votes come election time."

Victims' human rights

But Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay and Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella, both of Lakas, urged the people to stand behind the President on the issue.

"The administration means business in combating criminality and deserves public support," Pichay said.

Puentevella said: "While people clamor for the human rights of those convicted, we should also clamor for the human rights of those killed and those traumatized by heinous crimes."

Ricardo Saludo, deputy spokesperson for the President, told reporters that there were 35 convicts on death row scheduled for execution.

He said the earliest date of execution would be Jan. 30 for two convicted kidnappers. But Bureau of Corrections chief Dionisio Santiago said a rape convict was first in line. *(See story on Page A1.)*

Hasty response

Mel Moreno of Amnesty International-Philippines said they were saddened by what appeared to be too hasty a response to the rise in high-profile crimes.

Teodoro Casiño, secretary general of the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, said: "The President's move is patent rightist populism. It panders to the popular sentiment but doesn't really solve anything. Re-imposing the death penalty won't lead to better law enforcement."

Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida, however, had this to say on the matter: "It is better for [convicts] to die legally than for them to be killed extra-judicially in the streets. It was a 'very difficult' decision for the President to allow the executions," said her spokesperson Ignacio Bunye.

"But she has to make it, and she's exercising her prerogative as President," Bunye said. "That's what makes her a great President." *Reports from Christian V. Esguerra, Juliet Labog-Javellana, Blanche S. Rivera, TJ Burgonio, Michael Lim Ubac, Cynthia D. Balana, Norman Bordadora, Philip C. Tubeza, Martin P. Marfil and Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.*

Parole, pardon

TO FULFILL a Christmas tradition, the President granted conditional pardon with parole to 12 prisoners terminally or seriously ill or deemed overage.

In a memorandum to Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong and Santiago, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo ordered the release of Maximo Barcena Amoy, Benjamin Fernandez Abiog, Roberto Espiso Segovia, Julian Gozado Fernandez, Jose Decena Deleverio, Nestor de la Peña Virina, Montano Atayan Catli, Silverio Aloba Pastor, Eleuterio Jeray Raptus, Lucio Zata Martinez, Edizon Burco Ruanto and Teofilo Cruz Fernandez.

Most of them were meted life terms for crimes like rape, homicide, robbery with homicide and murder. They are afflicted with pneumonia, anemia, heart disease, osteoarthritis and other ailments.

A 13th convict, Juan Salvatiera, who died in October, would have been paroled.

The President also granted "absolute and unconditional pardon" to June "Jojo" V. Zapanta, a former mayor of Taytay, who was convicted by the Sandiganbayan of arbitrary detention. He had been given a jail term of from four months to less than two years.

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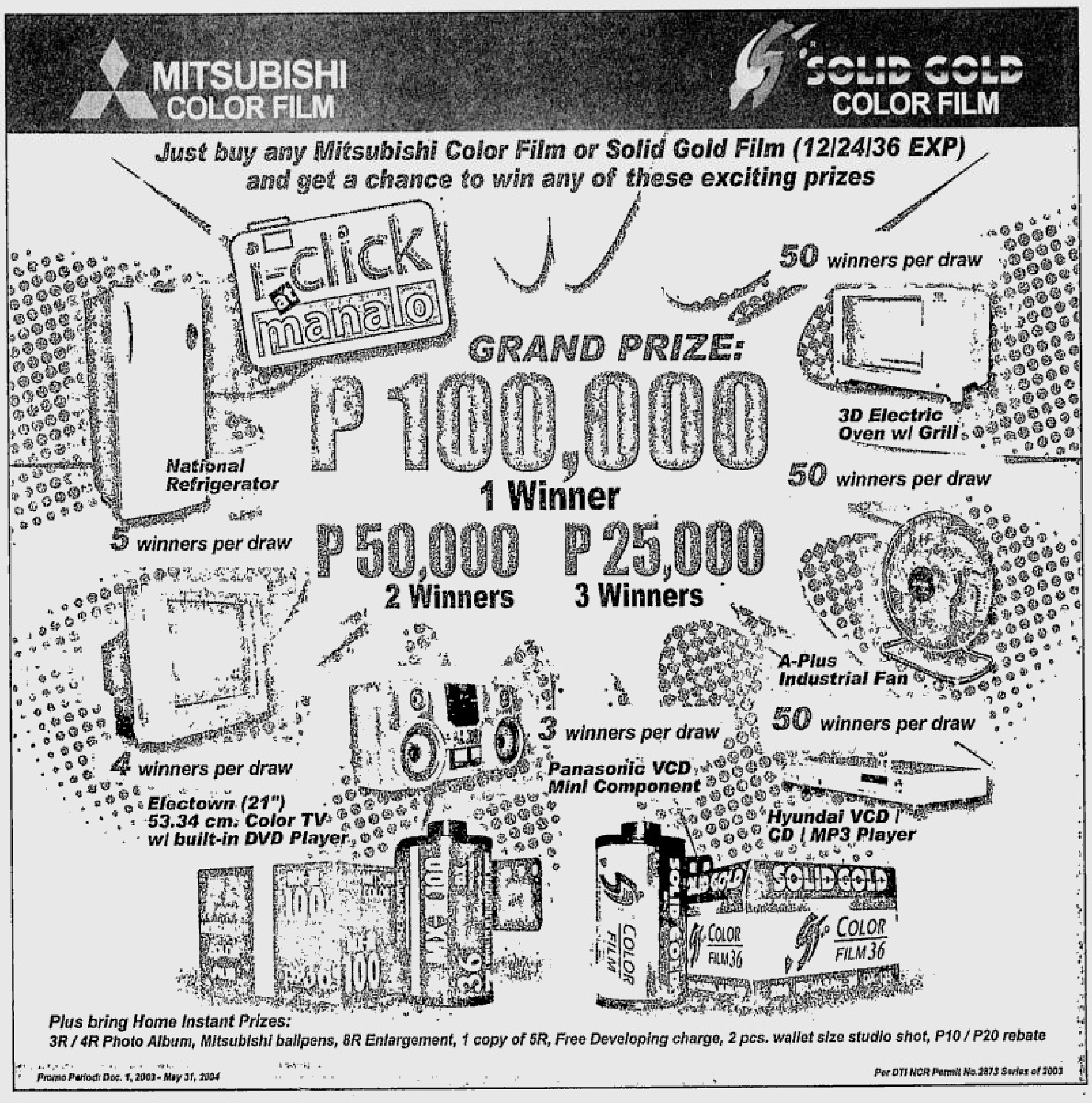
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Kissinger encouraged Argentine junta

BUENOS AIRES—Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger told Argentina's military junta "we would like you to succeed" months after it embarked on a bloody crackdown against leftists and dissidents, newly declassified documents show.

Kissinger, worried about the spread of leftist movements in Latin America in the 1970s, offered his support to the Argentine junta at a time when reports of human rights abuses were surfacing in the South American country.

His comments were revealed in newly declassified documents obtained by the independent National Security Archives and released Thursday. They detail an Oct. 7, 1976 meeting in New York between Kissinger and Argentina's foreign minister at the time, Navy Adm. Cesar Augusto Guzzetti.

Kissinger has increasingly faced criticism for US backing of authoritarian governments in Latin America and Southeast Asia as part of Washington's bid at the time to contain the spread of communism.

He has denied ever condoning human rights abuses, and did not immediately respond to calls for comment.

In the seven-page transcript marked "secret," Kissinger is quoted as telling Guzzetti that human rights issues were growing in Argentina.

According to the document, he offers support, nonetheless, to the military rulers who seized power in a coup in March 1976.

"Look, our basic attitude is that we would like you to succeed," Kissinger said, according to the documents, first reported by The Miami Herald. "I have an old-fashioned view that friends ought to be supported. The quicker you succeed, the better."

The Argentine military launched its systematic crackdown on leftist groups in March 1976, beginning six years of iron-fisted rule that saw 8,900 people disappear, according to a government report. Human rights groups put the number at around 30,000.

When Kissinger sat down with Guzzetti at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel for the meeting, Argentina's regime had been drawing condemnation from some countries for alleged rights abuses.

Last year, declassified state department documents suggested junta officials increasingly believed Washington was willing to overlook their methods to contain political dissent.

Robert Hill, then-US ambassador in Buenos Aires, detailed the sentiment in a series of diplomatic cables sent back to Washington, described Argentine officials as returning from meetings with Kissinger and Vice President Nelson Rockefeller in early 1976 "in a state of jubilation."

In the New York meeting, Kissinger insisted what was happening in Argentina was not being fully understood by American lawmakers who had raised concerns about rights issues in the country.

"What is not understood in the United States is that you have a civil war," he told Guzzetti. "We read about human rights problems but not the context." *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

36 die in Russia blast

MOSCOW—An explosion tore through a morning commuter train near Russia's volatile Chechnya region on Friday, two days before a parliamentary election, killing 36 people and authorities suspected a suicide bomb attack. Interior Minister Boris Gryzlov, head of the party backed by President Vladimir Putin in Sunday's polls, vowed to track down the perpetrators, saying: "The ground will burn under their feet." The emergencies ministry said 36 people were killed and more than 150 injured in the blast, which went off before 8 a.m. as the packed train was just outside Yessentuki station in Russia's southern fringe. Both the FSB and the interior ministry said a woman appeared to have detonated the explosion which sliced the train's second carriage in two. "We believe the explosion was carried out by a woman," a spokesperson for the agency said by telephone. Rossiya state television showed the carriage reduced to a mass of twisted metal and overhead power lines damaged, though the train remained upright on the track. *Reuters*

Attacks on US convoys

BAGHDAD—Two bomb attacks hit US convoys in Baghdad on Friday morning, a US military spokesperson said, adding that there was no immediate word on casualties. "We can confirm that at least two IEDs (improvised explosive devices of the sort favored by anti-US insurgents) exploded in Baghdad," the spokesperson said. "We don't have any casualty information at this time. More information will follow." One of the explosions hit a Humvee as a convoy passed an intersection in south Baghdad just north of the former Rashid military base. *AFP*

Vaccine against SARS

LONDON—A genetically engineered vaccine against SARS has shown promising results in early tests in monkeys and could pave the way for a protective vaccine in humans, scientists said on Friday. Two weeks after researchers at the University of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania injected six rhesus macaques with the vaccine, all of the animals showed a detectable immune system response against the coronavirus that causes Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. "It is our hope that this research will lead to a protective vaccine against SARS," said Dr. Andrea Gambotto, who headed the research team. The SARS outbreak which began in southern China last November killed 774 people and infected 8,098 in some 30 countries, according to the World Health Organization. *Reuters*

Polish PM hurt

WARSAW—Polish Prime Minister Leszek Miller injured two vertebrae when his helicopter made an emergency landing Thursday, but a spokesperson said this would not deter him from attending a key European Union summit affecting Poland's forthcoming EU membership. Miller and seven others were hospitalized after the incident in a Warsaw suburb, his doctor said. A government spokesperson said engine failure appeared to have been the cause. *AFP*

New breast cancer test

SAN ANTONIO—A first-of-its-kind genetic test will soon be available to help women with breast cancer make one of their most crucial decisions: whether or not to undergo the rigors of chemotherapy. Genomic Health Inc., a Silicon Valley biotech company, said it has identified nearly two dozen genes that, taken together, can predict with a high degree of accuracy the likelihood that tumors will return in women whose breast cancer was caught at an early stage. Currently, doctors predict the chances of a relapse in pretty much the same way they have been doing it for almost a century: by looking at the patient's age, the size of the tumor and the tumor's aggressiveness. If the chances of recurrence are seen as very low based on the gene test, a woman may opt to not endure the vomiting, hair loss and high cost of chemotherapy. But if the odds of the cancer coming back are high, she may view chemo as the difference between life and death. *AP*

Fallout from gay bishop

KUALA LUMPUR—The Anglican Church in Southeast Asia announced Friday it has broken ties with its US counterpart for consecrating openly gay bishop V. Gene Robinson, deepening the church's global rift on the issue of homosexual ordination. Archbishop Yong Ping Chung, the Anglican Primate for Southeast Asia, said leaders representing around 170,000 Anglicans in nine Asian countries voted unanimously on Nov. 20 to cut ties with the Episcopal Church, the US branch of the 77 million-member-worldwide Anglican Communion. The vote was taken at a special meeting of the church's Southeast Asian province called after Robinson's Nov. 2 consecration as Bishop of New Hampshire, a decision that has thrown the church into tumult around the world and split it into camps of liberals and conservatives. Robinson is the first openly gay man to hold the position of bishop in any major Christian denomination. *AP*

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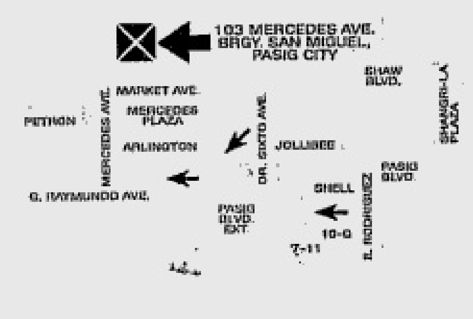

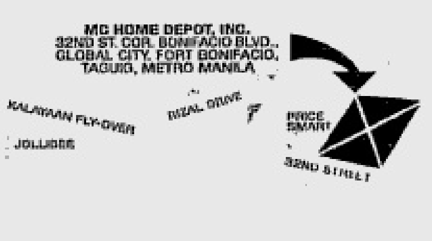

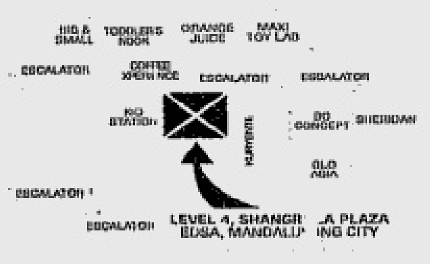

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Case vs Jacko in trouble

LOS ANGELES—Two weeks after Michael Jackson's arrest on child molestation charges, the case against him appears to be in trouble as reports about his alleged victim's family buoy his defense, aides claimed Thursday.

Prosecutors, who booked Jackson on multiple counts of lewd and lascivious behavior with a child under 14, have delayed the filing of formal charges that were due early this week but which are now not expected until next week at the soonest.

And following an almost surreal media frenzy when the "King of Pop" turned himself in to authorities in the California town of Santa Barbara on Nov. 20, the US press now appears more guarded in assuming his guilt.

"It's highly unusual for charges like this to take so long to be set forth," Jackson's publicist Stuart Backerman said. "That leads me to believe that there are some problems with putting forth the charges."

Prosecutors said charges against Jackson—accused of abusing a 13-year-old boy in 1993 in a case that was settled out of court for a large payment—had been delayed to allow them to set up a website to cope with the huge media and public interest in the celebrity case. *AFP*

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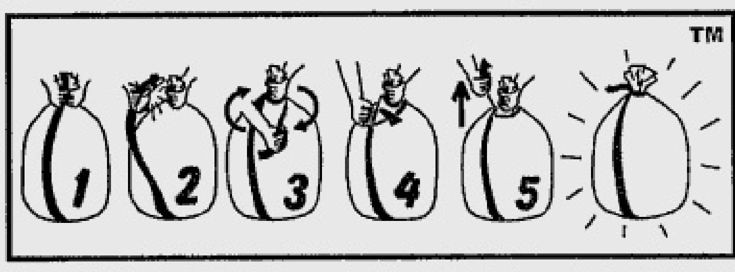

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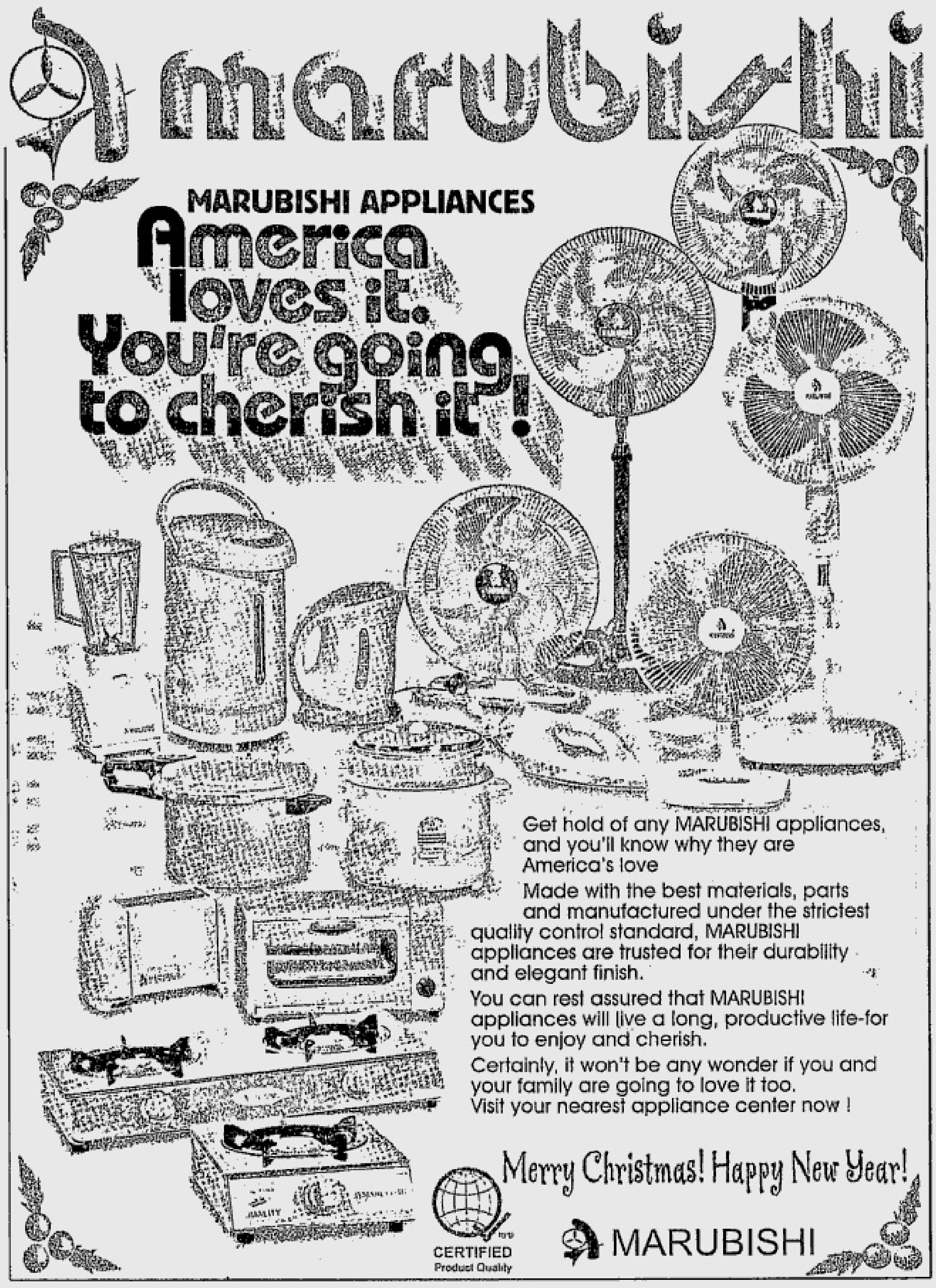

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2003
NATIONWIDE
ARCHITECTURE WEEK

UAP Celebrates Architecture Week

The United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) will celebrate 2003 Nationwide Architecture Week (NAW) from December 7 to 14. This year's theme is *"Ang Arkitekto Ko at Ako - Magkasama Tungo sa bagong Pilipinas."*

Warmest felicitations to the officers and members of the United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) on your *2003 Nationwide Architecture Week (NAW).*

My administration is committed to political stability and consistency of economic policies needed by the business community in their pursuit of greater corporate success in the global economy. By generating more business activity in our country, we move forward towards economic recovery and progress.

We continue reach out to all sectors to unite the people in the task of nation building to achieve our goals, we need greater citizen participation and responsibility. I urge you to broaden our partnerships towards genuine reforms and socio-economic development.

Let us always provide world-class professional and public services for all Filipinos. I commend your professionalism as architects and builders.

Mabuhay!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

Warmest greetings to the **United Architects of the Philippines (UAP)** as it celebrates the 2003 *Nationwide Architecture Week (NAW)*

Our architects recognize the importance of their role in nation building as highlighted in the year's theme *"Arkitekto Ko at Ako, Magkasama tungo sa bagong Pilipinas."*

The United Architects of the Philippines aims to integrate the Filipino Architects into the one organizational setup that would effectively serve the ideals and purposes of the profession.

May the celebration inspire all Filipino architects to reach the forefront of the global arena. This you could easily achieve through upgrading your professional capabilities and observing your responsibilities to your clients, contractors, manufacturers, dealers, agents and to your collegues.

MABUHAY KAYONG LAHAT !

TEOFISTO T. GUINGONA, JR.
Vice-President, Republic of the Philippines

The United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) plays a vital role in ensuring the continued growth of the architectural profession. You promote development that benefits all your members and put into place a much-needed network of support from which strength could be drawn to overcome adverse developments in your sphere of specialization. By harnessing the vast individual talents and capabilities of your members, you are able to endure and prosper even in times of dire challenges.

Equally commendable is your determination to contribute to the arduous task of nation building. And this is aptly captured in your theme *"ANG ARKITEKTO KO AT AKO – Magkasama Tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas.*

Much remains to be done to fulfill our dream for a new Philippines. It will require massive constructive action fueled by community spirit and national pride. Thus, I urge you to remain steadfast in your quest for excellence. Promote greater unity and professionalism within your ranks, and together, we will work for the realization of our common aspiration for a strong Republic and a better life for our people.

More power and *Mabuhay!*

BAYANI F. FERNANDO
Chairman, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority

My warmest salutations to all my fellow architects and friends as we once more take an exciting plunge in the observance of the 2003 Nationwide Architecture Week.

With the theme *"Ang Arkitekto Ko at Ako, Magkasama Tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas"*, may we be reminded that we Filipino Architects are being called to be united in genuine spirit of camaraderie and oneness not only for our individual progress but for the advancement of the entire nation. And instead of focusing more on what we can achieve for ourselves, let us open up our views on how we can help build our country and contribute to the welfare of others through our profession and through our professional organizational, the UAP.

As we celebrate this momentous occassion may i therefore encourage you my fellow architects and friends, to reflect on the extent of what we have already done and what remains to be done in providing solutions to the kaleidoscope of questions on how we can contribute more for the betterment of our country.

May we be reminded that the dignity of our work as designers and builders is not limited to merely constructing splendid and resilient edifices that are lasting, but also to our profession's enduring imperative contributions to building and shaping a nation.

May we continue to realize our crucial role as key players in Nation Building.

ROBERT S. SAC. FUAP
National President
United Architects of the Philippines

Welcome to the UAP 2003 Nationwide Architecture Week.

Bannering the theme *"ANG ARKITEKTO KO AT AKO – Magkasama Tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas,"* this UAP 2003 NAW is a bold attempt to thrust the Filipino architects' role in nation building. Banking on the Filipino architects' potentials and contributions, we can fulfill our dream for a new Philippines.

I would like to thank the individuals who have contributed so much to this project. To the working committee members, I salute you for sharing your knowledge and time to this worthy endeavor. To our partners in this endeavor, the sponsors, my heartfelt thanks for the unconditional support you have given from the time this event has started.

Onward we go. May the good Lord guide us along our way.

KA KUEN T. CHUA, FUAP
Chairman, UAP 2003 Nationwide Architecture Week

The more than 18, 000 registered architects in the country have very good reason to rejoice for they are the most concerned professionals during the celebration of the nationwide Architecture Week as per proclamation No. 934 on Nov. 18, 1971, to be observed every second week of December which this year falls on December 7 to 14, 2003.

I personally commend the UAP NAW organizing Committee this year headed by Architect Ka Kuen T. Chua, FUAP for having lined up a series of activities focused on the theme: " Ang Arkitekto Ko at Ako, Magkasama Tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas" which will indeed lend more emphasis to the role of architects in nation building.

As Chancellor for the UAP College of Fellows, and more importantly, having been recognized by my peers in the profession as Father of Architecture Week, I consider it more than a privilege and a pleasure to share the goodwill of our organization and the profession which incidentally will be 82 years old today since the first six pioneer architects in the Philippines were officially registered in the country's roster in Dec. 12, 1921.

RICARDO R. POBLETE, FUAP
Chancellor, College of Laws

The choice of the theme : "ANG ARKITECTO KO AT AKO, MAGKASAMA TUNGO SA BAGONG PILIPINAS". is timely and relevant to the vital role of architects in cooperating with our people towards the building of the new image for our country in this new millenium.

Like this activity, we, the Board of Architecture, Professional Regulation Commission, will continue to support your organization in undertaking all your present and future activities

MABUHAY KAYONG LAHAT !

EUGENE G. GAN, FUAP

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

DAY 1

Sunday December 7

- **Kick off : 2km Finger Painting at Quezon City Memorial Circle**

7:00 am Registration
7:15 am Thanksgiving Mass
8:00 am Welcome Address
8:45 am First Stroke of Finger Painting Event & Tree-Planting
11:00 am Opening of Quezon City Hall Exhibit
1:30 pm Opening of McHome Depot Exhibit

DAYS 2 TO 7

Monday thru Saturday December 8 - 13

- 4th National Symposium on Filipino Architecture
- Inter-School Student Competition
- Distribution of Seedlings for Tree-Planting
- Sports Fest
- Eucharistic Celebration
- Motorcade around Cities
- ***Murang Plano Pabahay para sa Mamayang Mahirap*** Project
- ***On-the-Spot Painting Contest***
- Interview with Info Channel 32
- Accessibilty Training Workshop
- Community Outreach Program
- Architectural Quiz Show and Symposium
- ARKI Exhibit 2003 by Asaphil
- SAID Balangkasan
- Design Career Orientation
- Design Rendering Competetion
- ***Handog Basurahan sa Barangay*** Project
- Gift Giving Project
- Plant Tour of Sual Power Plant & San Roque Dam
- Lecture on ***"Heritage"***
- Forum on Liturgic Architecture
- Medical and Dental Mission Project
- ***"A ChristMasquerade Ball"***
- Fun Games

DAY 8

Sunday December 14

- **Culmination Night at WOW! Philippines** Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel, Intramuros, Manila

6:00 pm Registration
7:15 pm Dinner
7:30 pm Welcome Address
8:00 pm Fashion Review: Arkitektong Kasuotan
8:30 pm Parangal sa Arkitekto Ko Awards
UAP 2003 NAW Award for RCBC Plaza
Orcom Awards
9:30 pm Announcement of Finger-Painting Works
9:45 pm Closing Remarks

UAP national president Architect Robert S. Sac, FUAP and UAP 2003 NAW Chairman Ka Kuen T. Chua, are confident that the celebration will highlight the role of architects in the task of nation-building.

The week-long celebration will initially feature a 2 kilometer finger-painting event at Quezon City Memorial Circle. Simultaneous finger-painting events will be held in Baguio, Antique, Bacolod, Bohol, Capiz, Dumaguete, Iloilo, Leyte, Cagayan De Oro and Davao on Sunday, December 7 from 7 am to 11 am.

In addition, the NAW organizing committee has lined up a series of activities to broaden the participation of architecture students, practicing architects, their families, and general public. The activities include City Hall exhibits, McHome Depot exhibit, sports fest,design competition,quiz show, national symposium, tree-planting and gift-giving.Free-consultation on housing construction problems are also offered.

The UAP will cap the week-long celebration with a NAW 2003 Culmination Night affair dubbed "Concert at the Wall" scheduled at Baluarte Plano Luneta de Isabel, Intramuros, Manila on Sunday, December 14 at 6pm. On that night, all finger-painting works from participating areas nationwide will be merged and measured with the end in view of gaining a place in the Guiness Book of World Records.

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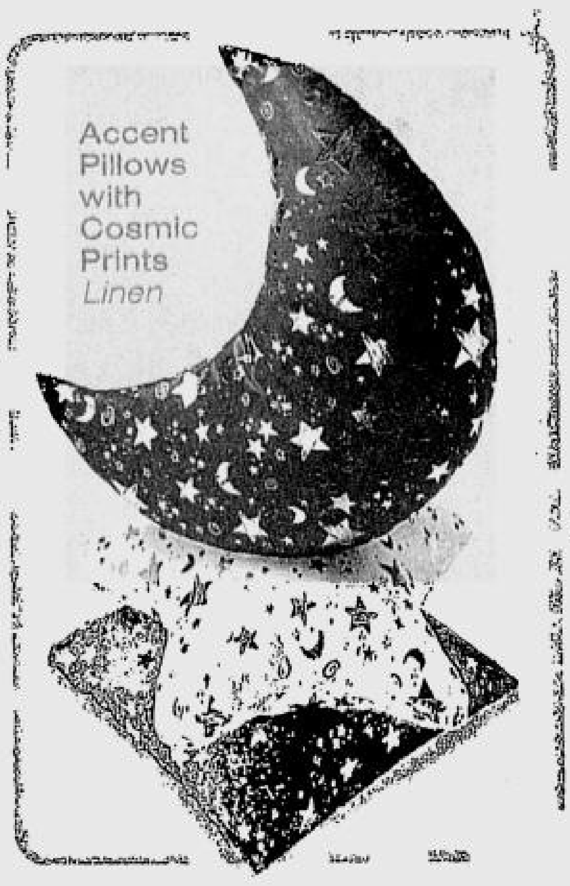
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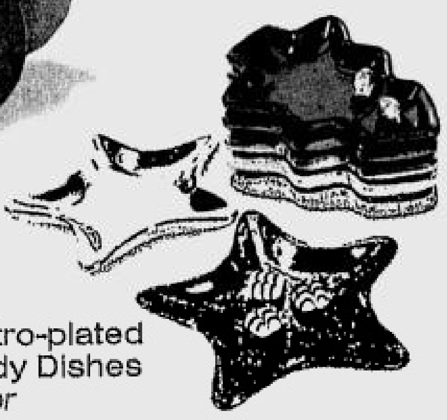
Ceramic Cookie Jars *Glassware*

Modern Lifestyle Metal Photo Frames *Decor*

Ceramic Soup Mug & Spoon Sets *Glassware*


Electro-plated Candy Dishes *Decor*

Noritake Porcelain Dinner Set *Glassware*

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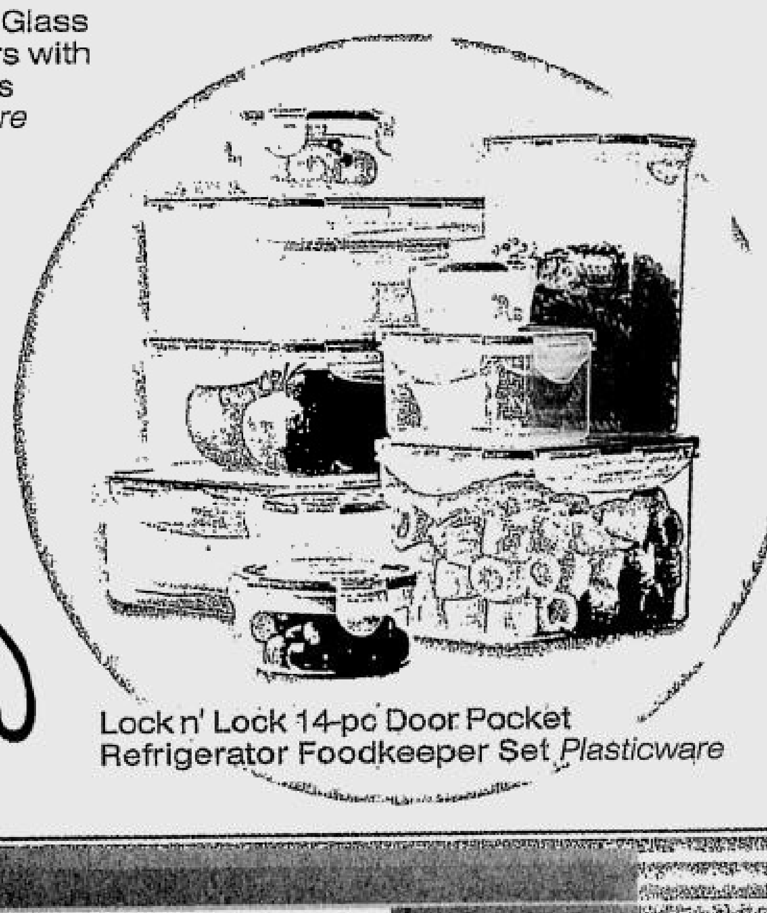
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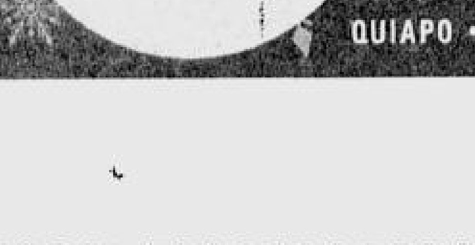

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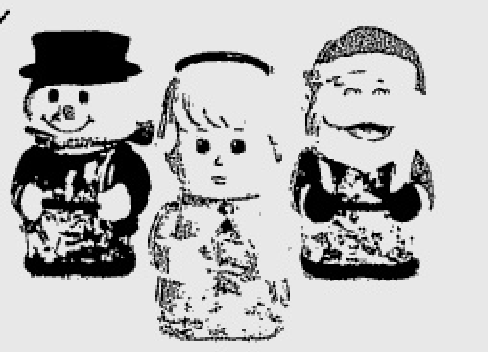
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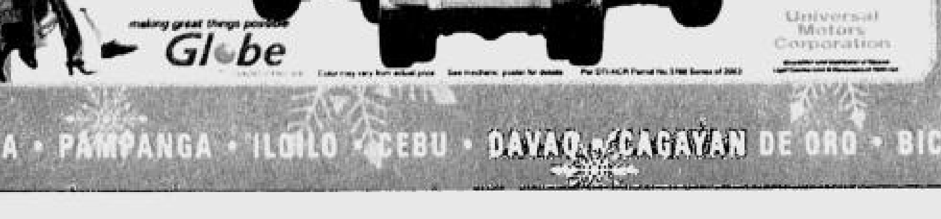
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OPINION

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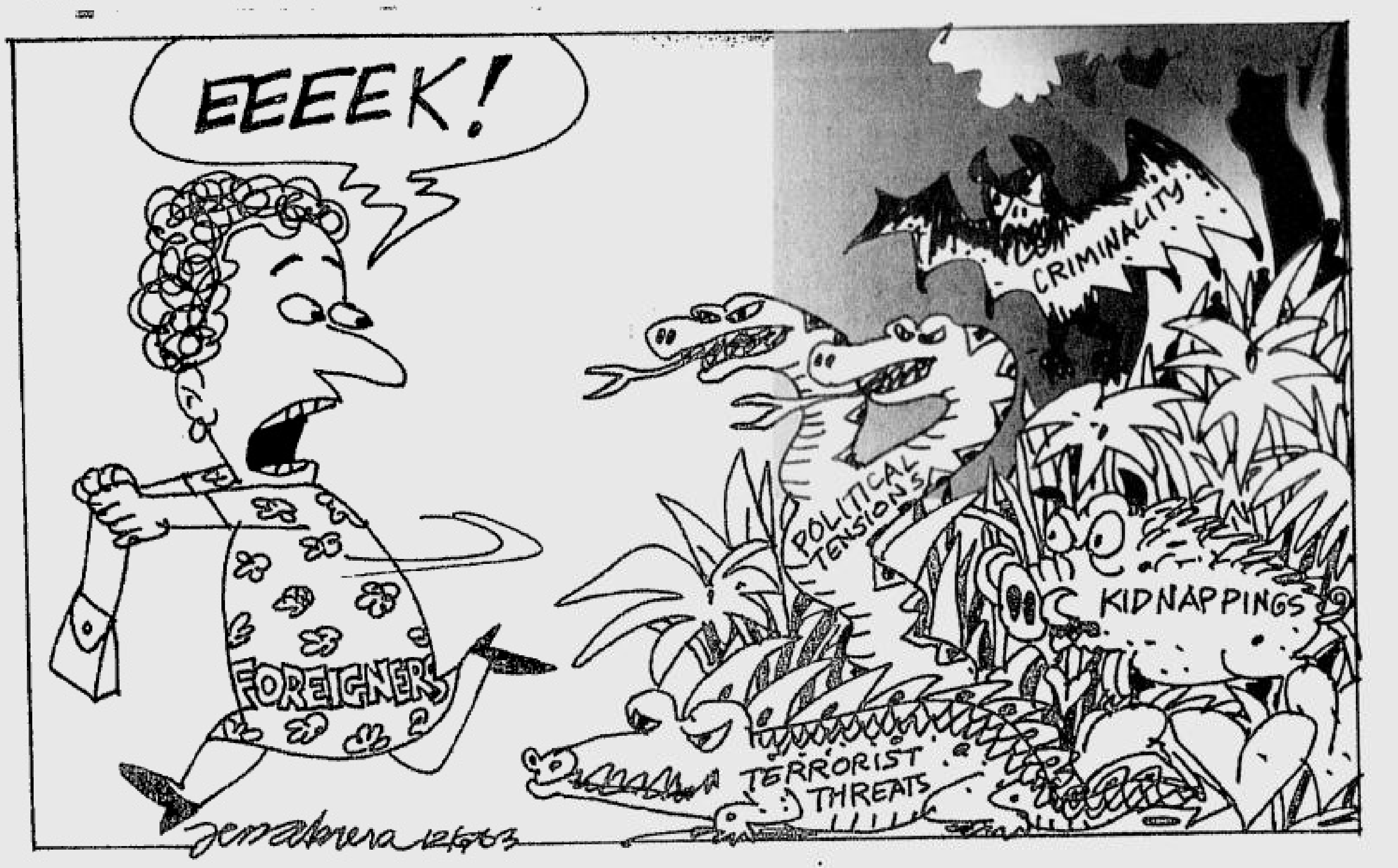


Surveys

EDITORIAL

PUBLIC opinion surveys are part of the selection process of candidates to high public office—including the president, vice president and senators—in the Philippines. We should, therefore, expect to see more frequently the results of surveys in the run-up to the 2004 elections, and they are bound to arouse increasing interest from the public and provoke controversies over their results.

In the face of the increasing importance of surveys in influencing voting behavior, the public should be warned that the most recent surveys cannot be the gauge of who will win the presidency and of how the people will vote. It is important to emphasize that a survey taken, say last November, merely captured the mood of the voters at that moment. Such survey is a snapshot of public opinion at the time. Voters' preference is likely to fluctuate, depending upon the issues and the uncertain turn of political and economic events. Public opinion is especially subject to fluctuations in unstable democracies like the Philippines, where democratic institutions that underpin political stability (such as political parties and conventions) play a less important role in the selection process than informal institutions like the media and even street turbulence agitated by the mobilization of mobs outside the electoral framework.

Between now and May 2004, coup rumors, another coup attempt, a major political realignment and another corruption scandal, and tremors in the markets responding to jitters caused by unsettling political events can change the public mood swiftly and shift votes toward or away from candidates who might be leading in the most recent surveys.

At this stage, the political map is still unsettled and undefined. The map could change any time before Christmas and after the New Year, during which period certificates of candidacy are to be filed. The political opposition is deeply split into two camps, and is unlikely to have a single candidate for president, and this split is certain to at least determine whether the presidential competition is going to be a four-cornered or three-cornered fight.

Such a scenario foreshadows a tightly-contested election. None of those shown in the surveys to be serious contenders is pulling ahead and breaking away from the pack and none can claim having established a momentum to touch off a bandwagon effect.

It is at this critical stage, where opinion is very much tentative and does not show any strong trend for anyone, that the public should be most wary about being deluded by results indicating the "winnability" or popularity of candidates. It is at this stage where public opinion can be hijacked by opinion polls into making choices in 2004 on the basis alone of popularity than on merit and credentials to provide intelligent and competent leadership to a nation that is at its wits end in searching for leadership rising above the transitory seduction of popularity.

Opinion polls have value to political tacticians and strategists. They are tools they can use to fashion their tactics, giving them guideposts as to what issues to emphasize and what weaknesses of rival candidates to focus on. To political tacticians, surveys can easily be manipulated to create a bandwagon effect, although in fairness to scientifically-based polls, it is possible to say that it is far from their intention to run a survey to try to create a bandwagon effect. This is all the more reason pollsters should be cautious and not be exuberant about their results, lest they lend themselves to manipulation by self-serving partisan interests.

The downside of election public opinion polls is that they emphasize "winnability" and popularity. These two elements are not the most important criteria for electing new leaders. Polls also have a responsibility to guide voters into having intelligent and informed choices. If they put too much importance on "winnability," at the expense of giving voters a choice that gives preference to competence and merit, then pollsters are making it more difficult for voters to make informed choices rather than going for candidates who have nothing to recommend them other than glitz. Elections are about making informed choices. They are not just a popularity contest which reduces elections to an exercise that rewards ignorance.

The police power

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

AFTER DELIVERING a lecture on the police power, Dr. Jose P. Laurel, the constitutionalist jurist, was approached by a disturbed listener, obviously a layman, who asked with mild alarm, "Sir, are you not giving too much power to the police?" The man was apparently distrustful of the police and had portents of a corps of uniformed lawmen enforcing a tyrannical regime.

For the benefit of citizens who, like him, identify the police power with the policeman, let me make this clarification. This may be necessary to inform the paranoiacs among us of the benign purposes of the police power and its awesome reach in the modern society.

The police power is one of the inherent powers of the State, the others being the power of eminent domain and the power of taxation. It easily is the most important of the three if we consider when and to whom each of these powers applies. The power of eminent domain applies only to persons unwilling to sell their private properties that are needed for some public use. Indeed, thousands of property owners may live and die without being directly touched by this power. The power of taxation applies only to persons with income or properties and does not cover even persons who are unable to pay the nominal poll tax. Millions of our impoverished masses do not directly pay a single centavo in taxes.

By contrast, the police power regulates not only property rights but, more importantly, liberty. Moreover, it applies to all persons of all ages regardless of status, sex, religion, property or other distinctions. It operates from the womb to the tomb, and in fact even beyond the grave like laws providing for the disposition of the dead person's body and of his estate, if any. It may even pursue the citizen wherever he may be, and sometimes even the alien also, beyond the territorial jurisdiction of the State.

In between conception and dissolution, the individual is hemmed in by the police power, in everything he does or owns as a member of the civilized community. The police power regulates him as he grows up, when he studies, reaches adulthood, marries and breeds a family, builds a house, practices a profession, runs a business, enters into contracts, travels abroad, runs for public office, and engages in various other human activities, including crime.

The individual may not realize this but how he acts in public, where he may cross a street, when he may start to drive, what views he may validly express and what shows he may see—all these and a myriad of other acts and things he may do or own are within the ambit of the police power. Its embrace is virtually limitless. The person's conduct and acquisitions are subject to the demands of the police power in the discharge of its task of regulating liberty and property for the common good.

The justification is found in the ancient Latin maxims *Salus populi est suprema lex* and *Sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas*, which call for the subordination of individual benefit to the interests of the greater number.

The police power is dynamic, not static, and must move with the moving society it is supposed to govern. Once exercised, it is not deemed exhausted but may be exercised again and again as often as it may be necessary to protect and promote the general welfare. Conditions change, circumstances vary, and to every such alteration the police power must adjust. Old notions may become outmoded even as new ideas are born, expanding or constricting the limits of the police power.

Yet for all its obtrusiveness in its present ambience, we should be elated that there are still areas where it may not intrude. As long as what one does or owns is not affected with public interest, it cannot be regulated or prohibited under the police power. What a person wears outside his house is subject to the laws on decency and obscenity, but he may not be punished for wearing nothing in the privacy of his own room. The police power cannot dictate the color of his library or where to part his hair or what music he should prefer. And while he may not sell his stock of rice above the statutory ceiling price, a similar restriction on a valuable painting he also owns would be unlawful because it is not a prime commodity.

Contracts that before were regarded as private transactions protected by the impairment clause have yielded to the intrusive reach of social legislation such as those providing for minimum wages and compulsory leaves for laborers; while valid at the time of their conclusion, they may be changed by the police power in light of changed conditions. And the police power continues to broaden or diminish as liberty becomes more assertive and private property becomes increasingly linked to the public interest.

Properly exercised, the police power can be an effective instrument for the furtherance of the people's welfare. There is in fact no better tool in promoting the greatest good for the greatest number in the free society. But it must be wielded with wisdom, fairness and respectful restraint lest it deteriorate into a bludgeon for oppression of the intimidated populace.

Fiscal irresponsibility

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

THE INDEXATION of sin taxes (on cigarettes and alcoholic beverages) relegated to the legislative dustbin once again. The VAT on doctors and on lawyers removed. A tax amnesty.

All these actions, actual or intended, have serious negative economic, social and political consequences: reduction in government revenue, resulting in larger budget deficits or constraints on government expenditures, on equity-promoting programs; unequal treatment of, or discrimination among taxpayers, e.g., wage and salaried taxpayers bearing the brunt of the tax burden; structural messages which the country can ill afford, e.g., it pays to evade taxes, breaking the law is no big deal.

Despite these implications, Congress has seen fit to undertake them, which indicates cavalier behavior at the very least, fiscal irresponsibility bordering on gross negligence at worst on the part of some of our legislators. There is no excuse for such behavior, especially since they regularly complain about the size of the government's budget deficit.

Take, for example, the shelving of the indexation of sin taxes. If one will recall, these taxes were changed in 1997 from a percentage of the value of the product (an ad valorem tax) to a fixed sum per unit of product (a specific tax) as a part of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program. The law, however, left out one very important provision that the Department of Finance wanted: that the amount of specific tax be automatically raised every two years in line with the inflation rate to ensure that the real value of the specific tax revenues would not be eroded.

Congress insisted that automaticity was neither needed nor desirable, because it would give the executive the power to tax. Congress itself would see to the indexing. Famous last words.

Between 1997 and 2003, the inflation rate, per the Consumer Price Index, was 40 percent. For tobacco products it was 35 percent, and for beverages, it was 41 percent. But these averages hide wide disparities. A pack of Lucio Tan's Champion cigarettes, for example could be bought at P5.35 in 1997, and now goes for P11.70, an increase of 119 percent.

Did Congress raise the specific tax on these "sin" products commensurately? In 2000, it raised the specific tax by 12 percent (inflation rate for tobacco was 17 percent at the time), and not since then. The attempt to raise it further has now been shelved, which means that for at least another year, sin tax revenues in real terms will continue to fall.

This, the country cannot afford. And Congress knows this.

If the country is losing, who gains? Certainly, among the direct beneficiaries of Congress' cavalier behavior would be Tan's cigarette companies and brewery, not to mention Danding Cojuangco's San Miguel. One can only speculate what form their gratitude may take in the coming elections.

Now take the move to exempt doctors and lawyers from the 10 percent Value Added Tax imposed on professionals. Why were doctors exempted? Since the it-would-hurt-the-poor argument for imposing the VAT on doctors does not hold water, the reason given me by both then Finance Secretary Lito Camacho and Sen. Ralph Recto (the bill's author) was that other countries exempt doctors from VAT. That may be the case (there are exceptions, I understand, like New Zealand), but what is overlooked in this argument is that the doctors in developed countries also happen to be, perforce, conscientious taxpayers. Which is not the case here. Imposing VAT on them will certainly be one way of making up for the revenue loss.

If the reason for exempting doctors is tenuous, exempting lawyers has no basis at all. That it was done is a demonstration of brazen, in-your-face political muscle-wielding by our legislators, many of whom are lawyers. Which leaves only the accountants and entertainers to pay the VAT imposed on professionals. So now we have the unfair situation where beauticians, mechanics, other service providers pay VAT, but not, if Recto et al. have their way, doctors and lawyers. By the way, a 1996 study shows that the average gross tax rate (income taxes paid divided by gross income) of professionals in the over-P500,000-a-year income category who are wage and salaried was a little less than 30 percent. The comparable ratio for professionals who are self-employed is less than 5 percent.

And then there is the move, supposedly initiated by the House leadership, to declare a tax amnesty. To paraphrase one writer, this is akin to telling a kidnapper, OK, you can keep your ransom, just give us a tiny portion and don't do it again. Illegal actions are condoned, and those who pay their legal taxes are in effect taxed more. The wrong message. And the wrong incentives.

Unfortunately, I have yet to hear a word from any of our presidential candidates on these issues. Why the silence? Depending on how kindly one feels toward them, one could hazard the guess that they have much weightier things on their mind, or that they are clueless, or that they are keeping their silence because they don't want to step on the toes of actual or potential campaign contributors. Equally unfortunately, media, supposedly our collective watchdog, haven't paid that much more attention either, judging from the dearth of column-inches of newspaper space and the radio and TV time devoted to the matter, as compared to the amount devoted to, say, the Kris-Joey break-up.

Nobody's minding the store, folks.

Criminality worldwide

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

FOR weeks, President Macapagal-Arroyo was obviously torn between equally passionate but opposing sides on the death penalty issue. In fact, what she went through reminded me of the Middle Age torture of quartering, whereby the victim's extremities were tied to ox-driven carts pulling in different directions, ending in his dismemberment. I had hoped she'd stick to her earlier decision to freeze the death penalty, but obviously she has caved in to pressure from many quarters, including ordinary citizens who want more decisive action against criminality. In fact, I read that the current imbroglio in the Philippine National Police where a number of prominent generals, including former National Capital Region chief, Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco, were reshuffled, was part of the renewed anti-crime campaign. Velasco was very effective against the Oakwood rebellion and he leaves the NCR with head held high. But I surmise that GMA needed a fresh approach since she promised a "kidnap-free Christmas." What some PNP officers, resent, however, is that the revamp was done apparently without due process. Even Interior Secretary Jose Lina was said to have known about it only after reading a press release. This was demoralizing.

* * *

Rep. Etta Rosales, chair of the House committee on human rights, has said that anti-death penalty advocates would work for the repeal of the law. That is the step in the right direction. The death penalty law was reinstalled by Congress and only that body can repeal it.

There will be an outcry from groups opposing the death penalty, including Church leaders, but at the moment, more citizens are for reviving it, and it's hard to argue with them about the human rights of criminals. The same is true of the national identification card. I suppose you can't argue with many citizens about its enormous potential for human rights abuse when what they see is that it will help weed out the criminals.

* * *

There seems to be a fresh wave of criminality here, but the trend appears to be worldwide. The Filipino chief of a giant multinational electronics firm operating here told me that his Malaysian counterpart was also complaining that criminality is quite bad in Kuala Lumpur. The KL executive's house was broken into no less than four times in recent months. One time his wife and 15-year-old daughter were hogtied in front of him and then the criminals mashed the breasts of the latter. One difference is that in Malaysia these crimes don't land on the front page or at the top of radio-TV news.

In Madrid, Spain's capital, the crime situation is not good either. My husband, who joined a trade mission to that country a few weeks back, recounted that our friend Tony Saromines, a staff member of the Philippine Embassy, was roughed up at 5 p.m. right in the heart of Madrid's busy Puerto del Sol by several men who then put a piece of cloth soaked in chloroform over his face and robbed him of everything, including his airport diplomatic pass. The embassy staff members were warned by Ambassador Lani Bernardo to stay away from certain areas of Madrid, which was unthinkable a few years back.

My US-based brother Roger came out of a big department store also in Madrid with two bottles of brandy for *pasalubong*, when three men accosted him and tried to grab both the brandy and his wallet. Roger fought back and made a lot of noise that frightened them.

On a visit to Madrid last year, my good friends, retired professors Oscar and Susan Evangelista, were accosted by several thugs not far from their hotel which they chose precisely for its "good location." The thugs grabbed them by the neck and hurled them to the ground and tried to rob them, but they screamed so hard that the thugs let them go before help came.

* * *

It's difficult to see how the opposition can unite behind a single candidate, after the acrimonious exchanges between two factions of the LDP. The Lacson faction criticized party chief Sen. Edgardo Angara for being "dictatorial" in "forcing" FPJ down the party's throat without due process. Angara called that faction's declaration of Lacson as its candidate "unauthorized."

Unless the opposition unites, they cannot recapture Malacañang. President Macapagal-Arroyo is solidifying her hold on Lakas by swearing in new members, or forging alliances with political bigwigs from other parties. Among the biggest catch are Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn, whose influence extends beyond his city, and Cagayan de Oro Mayor Vicente Emano and the city's lone member of the House, Constantino Jaraula.

* * *

The Manila Critics Circle, in cooperation with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the National Development Board, recently declared the four volumes of "Selected Essays/Studies/Homilies/Writings" of the late Jesuit historian Horacio de la Costa as the winner of the 2002 National Book Awards for History and Essay. Subsequently, the Ateneo University tendered a testimonial dinner in honor of the book's publishers, the 2B3C Foundation Inc. and the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus. Plaques of appreciation were presented to the publishers, as well as to Luis Olivares Jr., 2B3C Foundation president, and Dr. Roberto M. Paterno, who compiled and edited the books. Dean Benilda Santos of the Ateneo's Humanities Department has announced that the unveiling and blessing of the life-sized statue of Fr. De la Costa in front of the De La Costa Hall will be held on Dec. 10 at 6 p.m., to be presided by Fr. Romeo Intengan, Jesuit provincial. The statue was commissioned by Ateneo High School Class '52.

Brazen and wrong

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IN RESPONSE to a full-page ad, signed by concerned citizens, demanding to know where the budget allocation for the purchase of contraceptives has gone, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit called a press conference to "spill the beans" on where the money went.

Dayrit admitted that the DOH indeed diverted P63 million from the P267 million total appropriation for contraceptive commodities. The money, he said, was used to buy low-cost medicines. "It's very clear that the policy of this government is not to buy contraceptives… so instead of contraceptives, we got medicines that are badly, badly needed," he declared.

Clearly, there was an attempt to "pit" the social, if not health value of contraceptives—such as pills, IUDs, condoms, injectables—against those of basic drugs, like asthma medication, antibiotics and anti-diabetes pills. The inference is that poor Filipinos can do without contraceptives while their health, if not lives, are dependent on the drugs.

But it's a tactic rejected by the ad's signatories. "Contraceptives are no less vital to the health of women and children as any other health commodity like essential drugs, vaccines and life-saving medicines," they said in a statement. "In a situation where our leading economists have computed that the many poor households shoulder 45 percent or more of the cost of the national family planning program and the national government contributes only eight percent, it is wrong for Secretary Dayrit to divert public funds in the DOH budget intended for family planning supplies that could be used to ease the burden of the poorer sectors of society."

What Dayrit fails to realize—though as a health professional he ought to know better—is that family planning is a health necessity, as serial unplanned and unwanted pregnancies are a clear threat to the health and survival of women and their children. Not only are children born to mothers at high risk smaller and weaker, they are also less likely to survive childhood—if their birth means the family's meager resources will be stretched even thinner.

* * *

DAYRIT'S brazen defiance is even more scandalous considering the current situation. As the "expression of protest" points out: "Secretary Dayrit has refused to use available public funds to procure contraceptives at a time when the donated supply of this commodity will be insufficient for the total needs of expected users of these methods. His action will harm many women who depend on government for their supply of free contraceptives."

The signatories include former Health Secretary Alberto Romualdez (now president of the FriendlyCare Foundation), Aurora Silayan Go of the Foundation for Adolescent Development, Eden Divinagracia of the PNGOC, Roberto Ador of the PLCPD, and Mario Taguiwalo, a former health undersecretary.

The lack or absence of contraceptives in government facilities may not be a big deal for women and couples who can afford to buy their own family planning supplies, they say. "But for millions of poorer Filipinos, the insufficiency of free contraceptives in the public sector will mean either an added financial burden from buying what used to be available for free or the loss of the means to freely practice a family planning method of choice."

Is the choice for Filipino women, then, either to sink deeper into poverty or to carry an unwanted pregnancy? And even if the pregnancy is carried to term, the new child will most likely result in the family getting mired even deeper in poverty, with little prospect of rising above their situation.

Surely, Dayrit realizes that diverting money from family planning is not saving lives; it will in fact promote more abortions, more maternal deaths, more children dying earlier than they should.

* * *

IN THE SAME press conference, Dayrit admitted that the DOH had allocated P50 million this year on a joint family planning program with the Catholic group Couples for Christ.

I presume the program with CFC is in pursuit of the Macapagal administration's policy of "responsible parenthood through natural family planning," the only method that's approved by the Catholic Church for use by Catholic couples.

Setting aside for now questions on the real efficacy and reliability of NFP as a family planning method (the only side-effect, it's said, is pregnancy), there's something disturbing about the designation of Couples for Christ as the only partner of government in disseminating information on this method.

"We question the legality and wisdom of DOH allowing government resources and public funds to be accessed preferentially by a private and religious group like the Couples for Christ," says the statement.

"We appreciate the need to improve access to natural family planning or other methods sanctioned by the Catholic Church, among the menu of methods available to Filipinos. In the light, however, of Secretary Dayrit's refusal to use public funds to procure contraceptives, such support to some methods but not others indicates the readiness of the DOH to collaborate on what is effectively a form of coercion of Filipino women into using only those methods acceptable to the Catholic Church instead of being informed and supported to make other choices."

* * *

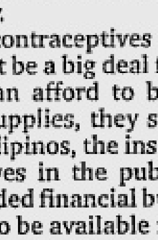
THE DICTUM of "separation of Church and State" means that government should not favor one religion or Church over others. By choosing to work only with CFC, is not Dayrit and the entire government guilty of violating this principle?

How will CFC counselors motivate couples to use NFP? By citing scientific reasons, or basing their exhortations on faith? Since when have we adopted a state religion?

Christmas customs and traditions

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



IT'S that time of year again when we begin to hear moans and groans about the commercialization of Christmas and how frenetic and stressful it has become. How often have we heard it said that the meaning of Christmas has been lost in all that shopping, wrapping and party-giving and -going. (It does seem to me strange though that we should confine "giving," whether of the self or of some material possession, only during this time.) Truth is, how many of us really know what it was like then except as children when we weren't involved in the mechanics of the holidays?

The Christmas celebrations that we know, complete with many Western traditions that have become part of our own, is no way as old as we may believe. Apparently, it has only been in the past 200 years that Christmas has been celebrated the way we know it. I have been told, for one, that the exchange of gifts, before World War II in Manila anyway, used to be done on Jan. 6, the Feast of the Three Kings, and that the focus was on the "Belen" and not on the Christmas tree the way it is today. The emphasis on Melchor, Gaspar and Baltazar and their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh are more a Spanish/Latin tradition than American. Since the Church has further de-emphasized the Three Kings so that Jan. 6 is no longer a holiday of obligation, our celebrations will continue to be influenced more by American customs.

Until the 1800s, Christmas was basically a pagan celebration. It seems that in both the United States and the United Kingdom, Christmas was a time of getting roaring drunk, singing bawdy songs and rioting in the streets! It was not a holy day but a day of excess, when the poor would storm the houses of the rich and demand food and drink. If the owners did not respond, they would break into the houses and take what they wanted!

That type of celebration harkened back to the times when Dec. 25 marked the winter solstice with a celebration of self-indulgence: the feast of Saturnalia, when the Romans celebrated the festival of Saturn, the god of peace and plenty. Dec. 25 was as well the feast of the sun god Attis in Phrygia and the birth of the sun god Mithras in Persia. It may come as a surprise to some that there is no factual basis for celebrating the 25th as the birth day of Christ.

For people who endured the cold and dark nights of winter, it's understandable why the shortest days of the year would be celebrated as the "rebirth" of the sun. Church leaders were naturally horrified that many of their converts would return to their old habits and the customs of their old religion and party with the best of them.

It wasn't until the year 125 that the birth of the Savior was institutionalized and Rome decreed that services should be held. It took another 200 years before Pope Julius I set Dec. 25 as the official date of Christ's birth. Emperor Constantine then made it an immovable feast and declared Sunday as a holy day in the new seven-day week. (Remember that he was the Holy Roman Emperor.)

While Church officials thought this would counter the pagan celebrations, it didn't work that way at all. Given the Sacrament of Confession or Reconciliation as it is known today, Christians would party today and repent afterwards!

Then you had people like Oliver Cromwell, the old Puritan himself who banned all Christmas celebrations! Anyone who took to the streets caroling was arrested, fined and jailed. For Cromwell, Christmas was a day of reflection when no gifts were to be exchanged, no parties given and no carols sung. Needless to say the minute he died people demanded the old celebrations back. In most of the English-speaking world Christmas was not a holy day at all.

Christmas was celebrated solemnly in other countries though. Germans considered it the second most important feast day, second only to Easter. Many of our traditions today—the fir trees, gathering of friends and family, the decorations—are traceable to Germany. But it was not until the middle of the 19th century when Queen Victoria married her German prince that the celebrations in England became family-oriented.

Since Americans were (and perhaps still are) influenced by the British, the new traditions were picked up. Not for the first time, it was literature that made the difference; a poem and a novel changed the way Americans looked at Christmas. "A Visit from St. Nicolas" now known as "The Night before Christmas" was published on Christmas Eve and influenced people to look at Christmas as a time for children while Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" emphasized the values of charity, hope and family. (Scrooge was really representative of the industrialists of the period when children were put to work in factories at the age of eight.) Incredible as it may seem to us (who are not given to reading), the book actually made people reexamine their values.

It still took another 20 or 30 years, but the Christmas celebration of drunken rioting changed finally and the day became one of worship, gift-giving and family. In the US, states began to declare the 25th as a holiday and churches started to emphasize not just Christ's death and resurrection but his birth as well.

So the next time you think about the celebration not being like the "good old days," just consider that those old days were in no way that old at all.

(Data from A. Collins, "The Great Traditions of Christmas.")

Crossing worlds

ANOTHER school year is under way. Ten fun, fruitful, fulfilling months, albeit sprinkled with the usual problems, will once again be wrapped in gold and kept in a treasury that only a privileged few can return to and reopen. I am one of them.

I have learned greater truths in the four years I have worked with individuals who have special needs than in the two decades I have spent in the academe. The wisdom I sought didn't automatically come with the certificates and diplomas, although they helped mold my understanding. I found wisdom in the most unlikely places and learned from the most unlikely teachers. Who would have thought that in the end it is the teacher who learns.

YOUNG BLOOD

Landa A. Bautista

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

Before I began teaching, I had grand notions of pushing children with autism to their limits, guiding adolescents with Down syndrome to be all they can become, and helping adults with mental retardation maximize their potentials. The universe, however, has a wonderful and beautiful way of enhancing plans.

One day during Circle Time, Teacher Ika asked Stefan, "Are you happy, sad or mad?"

"Happy!" he replied.

"Why are you happy?"

"Because Stefan is here!"

That was to be his consistent response to a question most of us do not know how to answer. It was the message that made me aware of lessons in retrospect and lessons to come. It dawned on me then that I wasn't just here to teach. I was here to learn.

There are few mentors on Life 101 than individuals with special needs themselves. Who better to learn from and teach lessons in giving and receiving, pride and humility, laughter and tears, letting go and holding on, needing and being needed, dreams and reality, strengths and weaknesses, trying and waiting?

They help make us courageous, creative, curious, dedicated, determined, forgiving, open, patient, positive, receptive, sympathetic and understanding. They carry with them gifts of faith, trust, uniqueness and wisdom. But most of all, they know more about acceptance, genuineness and unconditional love than any one of us.

In their little ways, they uplift souls, ease troubled minds, calm spirits, affirm good work and acknowledge one's presence—all without expecting any reward. It is 100 percent authenticity.

In my chest are: Paeng's kisses that relieved a plastic-stripped finger's pain, Bea's squeals of delight while swimming, Daniel's sprints, Richie's leaps, Mark's hesitant smiles, Luigi and Jame's first words, Miguel and Stefan's big hugs, Pierre's incessant questions, Baloy's daily greetings, Jolo's love songs, Fourth's toothy grins, Danby's talks, Andrew's melodies, Riqui's affection, Leo, Andy and Koko's lively banter, Jerome's surprises, JP's sensibility and so on and so forth. All wrapped in love. All given freely.

How can I not believe in angels when I work and play around them every day? I often wonder if they know how much they affect our lives with these unadorned pleasures that otherwise go unnoticed in a world that turns away in haste. How can I thank them for these and the countless, simple and priceless delights?

They patiently do demanding tasks. They unconditionally accept inadequate beings like me. They appreciate even things that others disregard. They touch and care for another's soul although they are the ones who need nurturing. All in a package that time and again is judged, misunderstood and not accepted.

I regard my profession (and vocation) differently every time I come from work. It gives me a sense of fulfillment, self-worth and pride to be in good company.

It isn't always an easy task. There are days when even the sunniest sun can't chase the gray clouds away. Yet, one cannot be too sad, too frustrated or too negative around children who cry when school is out. Nothing can rival that.

There is so much to being a special educator that not even the most attractive compensation package can offer. Our labor and love are not rewarded with great monetary gain or fame. Often it is even challenged by family and friends who ask, "Why do you stay?"

To which we reply, "Because we love what we do and we're happy here. Shouldn't that be enough?"

Our work comes with greater incentives that may not fill our pockets or fatten our bank accounts but satisfy our hearts and nourish our souls. This calling allows us to witness small marvels unfold and to see beauty in the simplest circumstances. Even if we never teach anyone anything, we know that somehow we are part of a loving miracle.

I live for initially darting eyes that eventually gaze at me, hesitant hands that in time hold mine, flailing arms that later enfold me. I live for the sound of my name on a student's lips and for encouraging words from parents. I live for wordless pats and hugs that say, "You're okay, Teacher."

At the end of each day, I smile and heave a sigh of contentment—happy to have been needed, happy to have needed to be needed, feeling grateful to have been allowed to enter a world that few people see.

It is a common myth that special children live isolated in a world of their own. Oh, no. Not at all, I declare. They live in my world. And, blessing of all blessings, they've allowed me to live in theirs.

Landa A. Bautista, 25, is curriculum coordinator of The Learning Center Inc. (TLC), a school for special-needs individuals. This piece is her way of thanking them for another chest full of memories, lessons and treasures.

THEY SAID

Cottage industry

"They've made a cottage industry out of coups. We see crackpots starting a coup, which ends before it even begins."

—Sen. Joker Arroyo

Proof of sincerity

"It is easy for the President to call for national reconciliation and healing. The question is, what is she willing to give up and sacrifice to secure it?"

—Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino, challenging the President not to run in next year's election as proof that her offer of national reconciliation is genuine

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From politicians to statesmen

ACCORDING to the dictionary, a statesman is one who is wise and skillful in conducting state affairs and treating public issues or one experienced in the business of government.

This is why in the Greek and Roman times, only learned men sat in the Senate to discuss public issues.

Corruption and corporations were unheard of. Corporations did not meddle with politicians, did not influence legislation and did not give money to political parties.

In the United States, before 1886, there were laws that prevented corporations from meddling in politics.

According to records (Ecologist, January 2003), Wisconsin State had a law that stated no corporations doing business in this state shall pay or contribute or offer consent or agree to pay or contribute, directly or indirectly, any money, property, free service of its officers or employees or thing of value to any political party, organization, committee or individual for any political purpose whatsoever, or for the purpose of influencing legislation of any kind, or to promote or defeat the candidacy of any person for nomination, appointment or election to any political office.

The penalty for any corporate official violating that law and getting cozy with politicians on behalf of a corporation was five years in prison and a substantial fine!

Today, however, free speech is a human right and individuals are free to say and do what they want.

Corporations do not only have rights, they also have privileges!

It is scary for the government to be in the pocket of anyone.

As Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said: Where corruption is openly accepted as a way of life, no country can develop and prosper.

While some politicians believe and support corporations engaged in genetic technology of food, the statesman knows that genes do not function in isolation but rather within the context of the genome, the organism and the environment.

If a chemical does not have any effect on a rat, it is stupid to deduct that the chemical does not have any effect on man. A rat is not a man.

The most bizarre excesses of corporations is the Cassini Mission, the spacecraft that will explore the planetary system.

According to newspaper reports, it carries with it 72.3 pounds of plutonium—238, one pound of which could hypothetically induce lung cancer in every person on earth!

The ancient Greek philosopher Pythagoras and later Plato, introduced the principle of examination and spiritual initiation into the government of the state. Intelligence and virtue are the basis of governance.

As Thom Hartmann, author, said: We must first get corporations out of government so politicians can once again be statesmen.

Albert Einstein once said the world is a dangerous place to live in, not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it.

Now, the ball is in your hands. What will you do in 2004?

—LEONARDA N. CAMACHO,
commissioner,
Unesco Philippines,
215 Regency Park,
207 Santolan Rd., QC

Bulacan bought only 39 vehicles

THIS is to clarify some points raised in the column of Neal Cruz titled, "Stop buying vehicles for public officials." (PDI, 11/13/03)

There are always two sides to a story:

1. The province of Bulacan does not have a car plan for its board members and other senior provincial officials. Vehicles that have been purchased by the province that are assigned to department heads remain as government property and are strictly for official use only. These are not luxury vehicles. No board members or councilors (who are not provincial officials but municipal) are assigned service vehicles at all.

2. As to the number of vehicles purchased, please be informed that from January to November of this year, only a total of 39 vehicles were purchased by the province, 13 of them from June to August. This includes 26 for the Bulacan PNP for its peace and order campaign, two ambulances and 11 for various departments of the provincial government. The provincial government did not buy 53 vehicles as claimed by Cruz.

3. True, the vehicles were bought from Freeway Motor Sales, not because the dealership is controlled by the De la Cruz family as Cruz would like to convey, but because the terms offered by Freeway Motors were very advantageous to the government.

As to the ownership of the corporation, records provided by the Securities and Exchange Commission show that although Joselito Mendoza was an original incorporator of Freeway Motors, he divested his shares in the company on Sept. 25, 2000, a fact which was duly recorded with the SEC. The Mendoza family therefore does not own a single share of the corporation nor does the De la Cruz family. All these are recorded in the stock transfer book of the company, which can be made available to anyone. It is obvious that the informants of Cruz did not do a thorough research.

Lastly, we have great respect for the INQUIRER and Cruz. But we wish that Cruz took the time to call our office to get our side of the story first. It would have saved both parties a lot of unnecessary trouble as a result of the inaccurate story.

—MA. CECILIA E. YACOB,
head, Provincial Public Affairs Office,
Bulacan Provincial Capitol Bldg.,
Malolos City, Bulacan

Bring RP troops home now

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo said she will pull out the Philippine contingent of troops and humanitarian workers she sent to Iraq if the threat to their security worsens.

I have no idea what she means. The threat is there. The only way it can get worse is if our contingent gets hit. By then it would be too late. I say do it now!

The United Nations, the Red Cross, the British, the Jordanian, the Polish and the Italian contingents have already been hit. The UN and Red Cross have, in fact, already withdrawn following the devastating attacks on their headquarters. The Japanese have seen the peril of sending troops and so have decided to refrain from doing so now.

More tellingly, the United States has already shifted position and has decided to give the Iraqis self-government by mid-2004. The United States has come to realize that the situation cannot and will not improve. American troops are getting killed on an average of one a day.

Madame President, please bring home our countrymen now and let them celebrate Christmas with their loved ones. Any tragedy that may befall them will be on your conscience the rest of your life. And all because of your concern not to displease the United States, especially with the forthcoming 2004 election?

—REYNALDO O. ARCILLA,
roarci@i-manila.com.ph

Defective selection process for top AFP posts

RAMON Farolan's column ("Abu now commands the Philippine Army," PDI, 11/16/03) showcased a defective selection process for AFP key posts that gives weight to patrons and so-called "public perception" of the contenders instead of their total worth in the service.

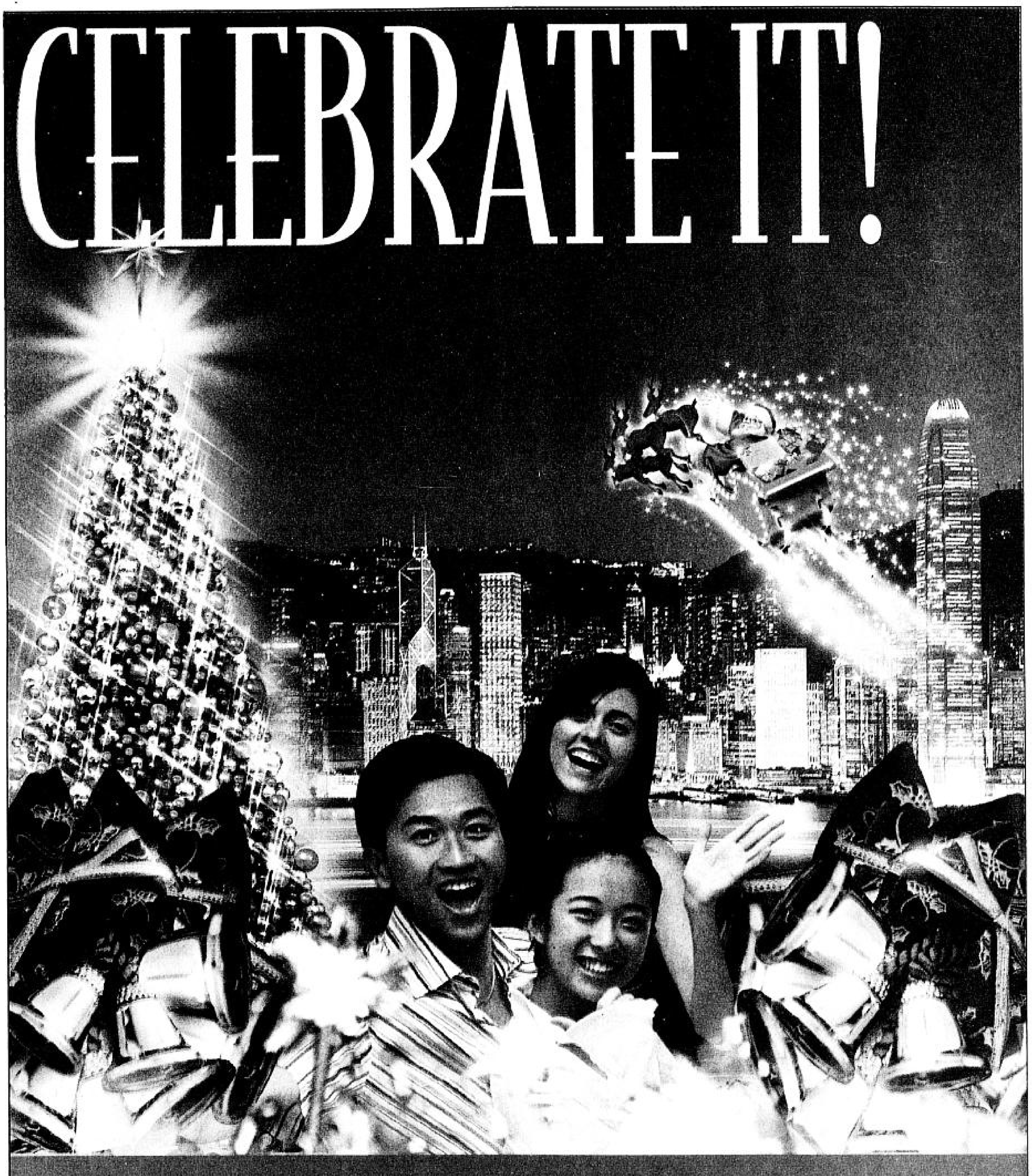
In his explanation of my being "out of the race for CG, PA" he conveniently mentioned the Lamitan incident without citing that the AFP inspector general had cleared me of all charges. He thus contradicted his own focus on my service reputation (which has remained intact despite the well-orchestrated demolition job that dogged me ever since some "self-proclaimed kingmakers" saw me as a threat to the personal ambitions of their protégés). Mercifully, he pointed out the two successive promotions I received after the legislative hearings: My second star in Dec 2001 and the third in July this year. Confirmation of these promotions breezed through the Commission on Appointments whose members came from both chambers, the same bodies that conducted separate hearings on the Lamitan incident. Such confirmations would have not been possible had Lamitan weighed down my credentials.

Farolan, a retired general and a former PAF chief, also ignored career profiles of the "contenders," although SOIs are public documents. A quick scan would show the disparity in the qualifications of those considered for the position and explain my being the top contender. The hint on "trust" as basis is dangerous; it undermines every soldier's loyalty to the flag. When one is considered as "less trusted," could it mean he is less professional? It questions the very essence of soldiery.

What will now prevent junior officers from avoiding assignments in far-flung areas and to start cultivating closer ties with rising politicians while enjoying comfortable assignments, confident that required billets can anyway be fast-tracked?

It seems that the unfair selection that the good general described resulted in what could be perceived as an irrational decision; but the good soldier that I am, I hold it in respect. The professional in me believes in working harder as the best revenge against such an injustice.

—LT. GEN. ROMEO B. DOMINGUEZ,
chief, Northern Luzon Command,
Armed Forces of the Philippines,
Camp Aquino, Tarlac City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Cebu-based Koreans offer ₱1M for killers of countrymen

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The South Korean community in Cebu has offered P1 million in cash reward for information that will lead to the arrest of the assailants of the two Korean businessmen ambushed last Saturday in Lapulapu City.

The Cebu-Korean Association, headed by Johnny Back, formally announced the cash reward Thursday afternoon in a meeting among Korean residents in Cebu held at Shabu Shabu Ox Restaurant, which was owned by the two victims, in Lapulapu City.

The money will be given to those who can give information that would lead to the arrest of the gunmen and mastermind in the ambush and killing of Cho Yoon Sik and Kim Suk Shin, both 52, on Nov. 29 in Marigondon, Lapulapu City.

Back said the money was a result of a fund-raising campaign among the members of their association. There are about 1,000 Koreans living in Cebu.

Any person who is willing to give information can call or text 09263375540, the association said.

Back said the association would also be willing to donate vehicles to the police for their anticrime operations.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has offered a reward for those who can give information that will solve the killings of the two Koreans.

Reynaldo Esmeralda, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) director for Central Visayas, said the cash reward would help speed up the investigation but until yesterday, he said, they have no suspects yet.

Esmeralda clarified the earlier report of his office that they are looking into the possibility that another Korean was involved in the crime.

Esmeralda said they have no evidence against this Korean.

Esmeralda said his men were still trying to get witnesses who could describe the killers.

189 Japan-donated computers stolen in Pampanga, Tarlac

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—At least 189 Central Processing Units (CPUs) of computers donated by the Japanese government were stolen from 11 public high schools in Pampanga and Tarlac since June last year, depriving 2,500 students of training in information technology, according to officials.

Blesilda Lantayona, Central Luzon director of the Department of Trade and Industry, the lead agency in the "PCs for Public School Project," said the Philippine National Police has not yet solved any of the theft case so far.

The latest theft incident occurred at the San Carlos High School in San Luis town early this week. Twenty CPUs given on a grant from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) were taken by still unidentified suspects, village and school officials said.

The latest theft brought to 88 the number of CPUs stolen from the Anao, Del Carmen, Dolores and San Juan high schools in Mexico, Lubao, Magalang and San Luis towns in Pampanga province.

In Tarlac, a report of the trade department said robbers took away 101 CPUs in the Alvindia Aguso, Mababanaba, Ramos, San Felipe, Guevarra and Baluto high schools in Tarlac City and public schools in San Jose, Ramos, San Manuel, La Paz and Concepcion towns.

Lantayona said barangay councils and associations of parents and teachers have been urged to tighten the security in the school premises to prevent future thefts of computers or computer parts.

Fourth year students in public schools use the computers in their technology and home economics classes. Without the equipment, teachers have been giving lessons relying only on visual aids without the students getting any hands-on training on the use of computers.

The teachers would also introduce other subjects such as electronics in place of computer lessons in the absence of working computers.

The PCs for Public School Project, started last year, complemented the computer programs of the Department of Education and Department of Science and Technology that was able to reach only 1,134 of 3,956 public high schools nationwide, a trade department report said.

The project's one-year computer education curriculum, made pursuant to Executive Order No. 18, provides students basic lessons on software applications like word processing, spreadsheets and presentation software, Internet use, basic programming and diagnostic and troubleshooting general software and hardware problems.

Lantayona said Japan approved the grant in line with the objectives of its comprehensive cooperation package addressing international digital divide or the inability of poor countries to upgrade IT capacities because of lack of equipment.

The package was announced during the Kyushu-Okinawa Summit.

In the project, Intel Philippines provided free computer training for teachers while Microsoft Philippines gave a software assistance package. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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2 Isabela prisoners bolt jail, kill guard

ROXAS, Isabela—Two prisoners of the Isabela provincial jail stabbed and shot dead their guard-escort in Luna village here before escaping on Thursday, local and police officials said.

Mayor Benito Calderon identified the escapees as Augusto Valmeo and Luciano Ballaad. Arnel de Guzman, provincial jail guard, died from a stab wound and four bullet wounds. He died on the spot.

Calderon said the escape would serve as a lesson to jail guards who, out of overconfidence and negligence, would allow their prisoners to move freely.

Jail records said Valmeo, 30, is facing charges of illegal drugs and illegal possession of firearms. Ballaad, on the other hand, is facing rape charges.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Masbate cop chief says probe of radio man's slaying to be broader

LEGAZPI CITY—The chief of police of Masbate province expressed suspicion that radio man Nelson Nadura may have been slain because of his commentaries on air at the province's lone radio station.

Senior Supt. Romeo Mapalo said he is inclined to believe that Nadura's subjects in his commentaries wanted to have him killed.

"What we are looking at in this case are the people that he had hit—politicians, a former Comelec official and even officials of the DPWH," said Mapalo.

"His latest attack was against the controversial P340 million loan of the provincial government with the Land Bank which Nadura said made even Sangguniang Panlalawigan members turn around," said the police chief.

Mapalo said he believes that one of the politicians hit by Nadura might have used goons to silence Nadura. "The problem here is even councilors have goons and bodyguards and we are looking at all those angles," said Mapalo.

He said as soon as witnesses have identified the suspects, all they have to do is conduct a police line up.

Nadura had been a block-time commentator in Masbate's lone radio station dyME since 2001.

His wife Wilma pleaded to Task Force Nadura to investigate all angles in the killing and not focus on his being a former leader of the New People's Army.

Nadura was shot dead by two men after his program on Dec. 2.

During his colleagues' visit at Nadura's wake in his residence at Barangay Poblacion-1 in Mobo town, Masbate, Wilma cried out for justice for her husband.

Wilma also disclosed that her husband was getting death threats through text messages. The first message, she said, was received last Nov. 22, and the last one was about two days before his killing.

Nadura's family is having a hard time trying to recall the exact contents of the text messages as they could no longer locate his cellular phone after his killing.

But the family said the message did not come from the NPA. In their appeal to investigators, Nadura's family appealed for swift justice for the slain radio man.

Chang Enciso, dyME officer-in-charge, supported Nadura's widow in her appeal for authorities to investigate all possible angles and motives for the killing.

She said she believed that Nadura's killing is related to his work as a broadcaster since he regularly attacked various personalities and agencies as part of the commentary program's format.

"As a block timer, 'Ka Nelson' usually attacked a lot of personalities, not only government officials and politicians, but even the military," she said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

Mapalo had denied limiting the investigation to one angle alone. He said they have already created a task force composed of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, the Masbate PNP Crime Laboratory, and the regional intelligence office. *Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Poll execs note hike in number of new voters

DUMAGUETE CITY—Election officials in Negros Oriental expressed amazement at the number of new voters who turned up during the general registration Aug. 18 to Nov. 8.

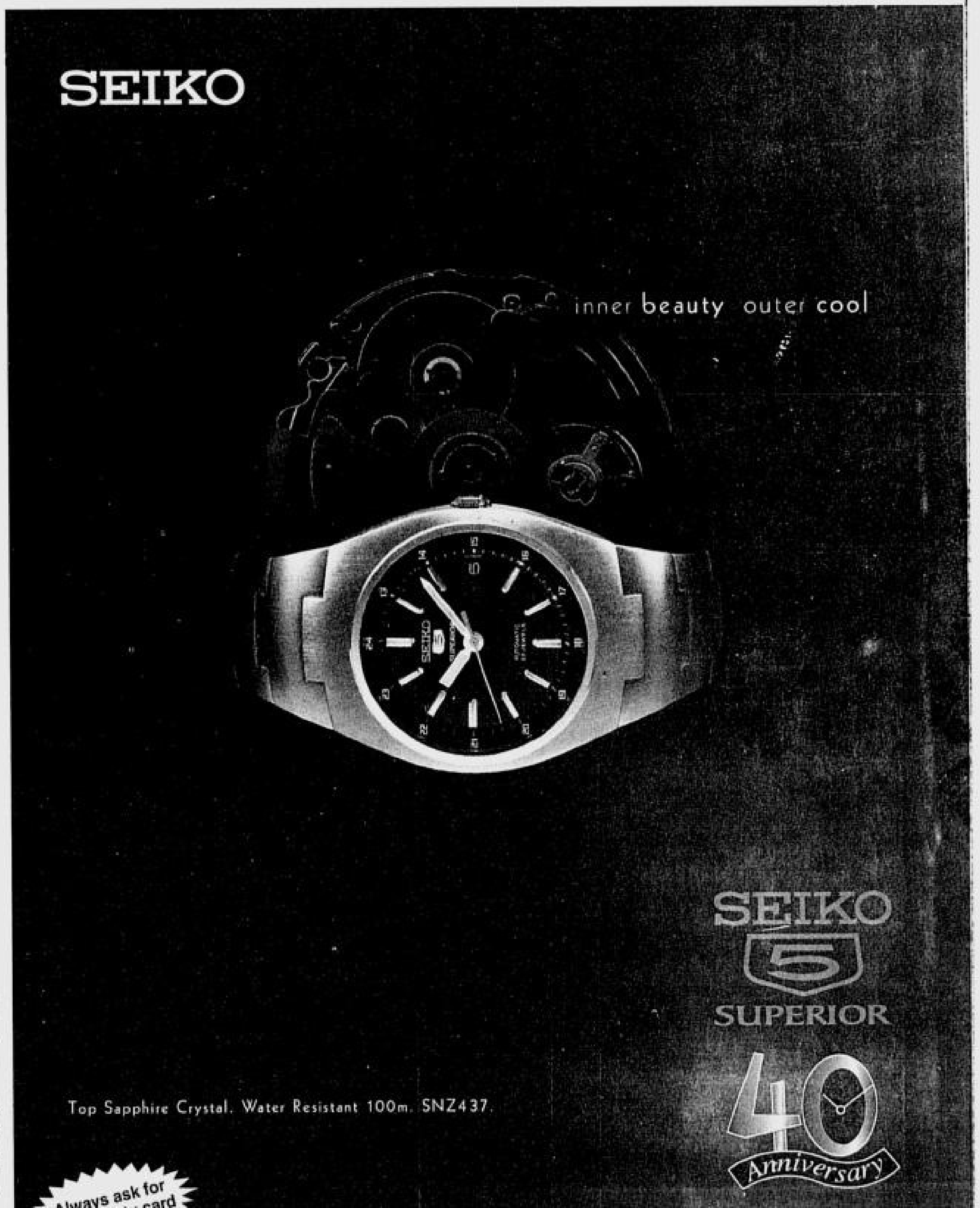
Based on a report from election field officers, provincial poll supervisor Rogelio Benjamin said the number of registrants in the province's five cities and 20 municipalities increased by an average of 17 to 18 percent.

He said they were surprised by the turnout because based on his experience, only 3 percent of new voters were expected to be added to the present number of voters.

Comelec registrar Roberto Remolano of Pamplona town reported some 17.5 percent increase of new voters. He said it was more surprising because prior to this year's general registration, the Comelec conducted a continuing registration of voters.

Besides, he added there was also a general registration during the barangay elections in 2002.

Remolano said some localities even registered more than a 20 percent increase in new voters. *Romy Amarado, Visayas Bureau*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Church backs anti-logging prosecutor

BACOLOD CITY—The three bishops and 95 priest of Negros Occidental have appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to intervene in the "unjust" removal of Isagani Rabe as the state prosecutor handling the illegal logging case filed against a town mayor and 18 others here.

Bishops Vicente Navarra of Bacolod, Patricio Buzon of Kabankalan and Jose Advincula of San Carlos said that they were asking the President to intervene "not only for our endangered environment but for our critically threatened justice system."

Rabe has been handling the preliminary investigation of a case filed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) against Don Salvador Benedicto Mayor Cynthia de la Cruz, her husband, Nehemias, and 17 others for the cutting of centuries-old trees in the town's forest reserve.

Rabe was about to hand down his resolution on the complaint when he was ordered replaced by Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong.

The bishops and priests, in a joint statement, said they view the decision of the Department of Justice (DOJ) to replace Rabe as "grossly one-sided, unfair, unjust, malicious and an abuse of the DOJ Secretary's executive prerogatives."

Datumanong in Department Order No. 427 dated Nov. 5 removed Rabe from the case against De la Cruz and her co-accused "in the interest of the service and pursuant to the provisions of existing laws."

Datumanong designated Assistant City Prosecutor Jesus Ocdinaria of the Bacolod City Prosecutors Office to replace Rabe.

The DENR charged De la Cruz and 18 others in September last year with violating the Forestry Code for illegally cutting 130,548 cubic meters of naturally-grown trees worth P1,660,570 located within the 22.8-hectare Northern Negros Forest Reserve in Don Salvador Benedicto, 42 km east of Bacolod.

The complaint claimed that the De la Cruz couple allegedly ordered the cutting of trees in the forest area from 1995 to 2002.

The Church officials said Datumanong's order contravened an order of Regional Trial Court Judge Ramon Delariarte on Sept. 15 denying a motion by De la Cruz group to have Rabe removed as prosecutor of their case for "lack of merit."

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

HOLIDAY REST

There's no stopping Christmas from drawing near and this lantern vendor on Tiongco Street in Davao City takes a break before buyers start flocking just as the clock ticks for the holidays.

CENTRAL MINDANAO'S OLDEST

₱20M set aside for Cotabato Airport runway repair

COTABATO CITY—The Department of Transportation and Communication has set aside a P20 million budget for the urgent rehabilitation and repair of Central Mindanao's oldest yet most substandard airport.

Lawyer Virgilio Leyretana, deputy presidential assistant for Mindanao, said Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza has told President Macapagal-Arroyo during the inauguration of the Davao International Airport Monday that the 50-year-old Awang Airport runway in Maguindanao would be rehabilitated within six months.

"It was confirmed by the President," Leyretana told the INQUIRER.

The growing concern voiced by residents, local officials and business leaders over the danger posed by the 1,970-meter long runway to airline commuters "has prompted us to appeal to . . . President Macapagal for the immediate rehabilitation of the facility due to its deplorable state," Leyretana said.

Short

The runway, which is short of about 300 meters, could not accommodate international flights.

Foreign funding has been set aside for the rehabilitation of the airport but due to lack of government concern the funding was called off, it was learned. And the government counterpart in the budget was instead used for the development and rehabilitation of other airports in Mindanao.

The substandard runway has propelled business establishments, like the Mindanao Textile Corp. (Mintex), to ship cargo for Manila via the Davao International Airport, a route that would cost more for the business firm.

Quoting a report from the textile firm, Leyretana said Mintex has transported some 16,000 cartons of dry goods worth some P2.52 million in 43 land shuttles for Davao from January to September this year.

Calling it an indispensable component of the economic development of Central Mindanao, Leyretana said the airport is among the major sources of revenues for Maguindanao and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Cotabato City Mayor Muslimin Sema, who also chairs the Regional Development Council, has been pushing for the repair of the runway that has deteriorated through the years.

Cancelled flights

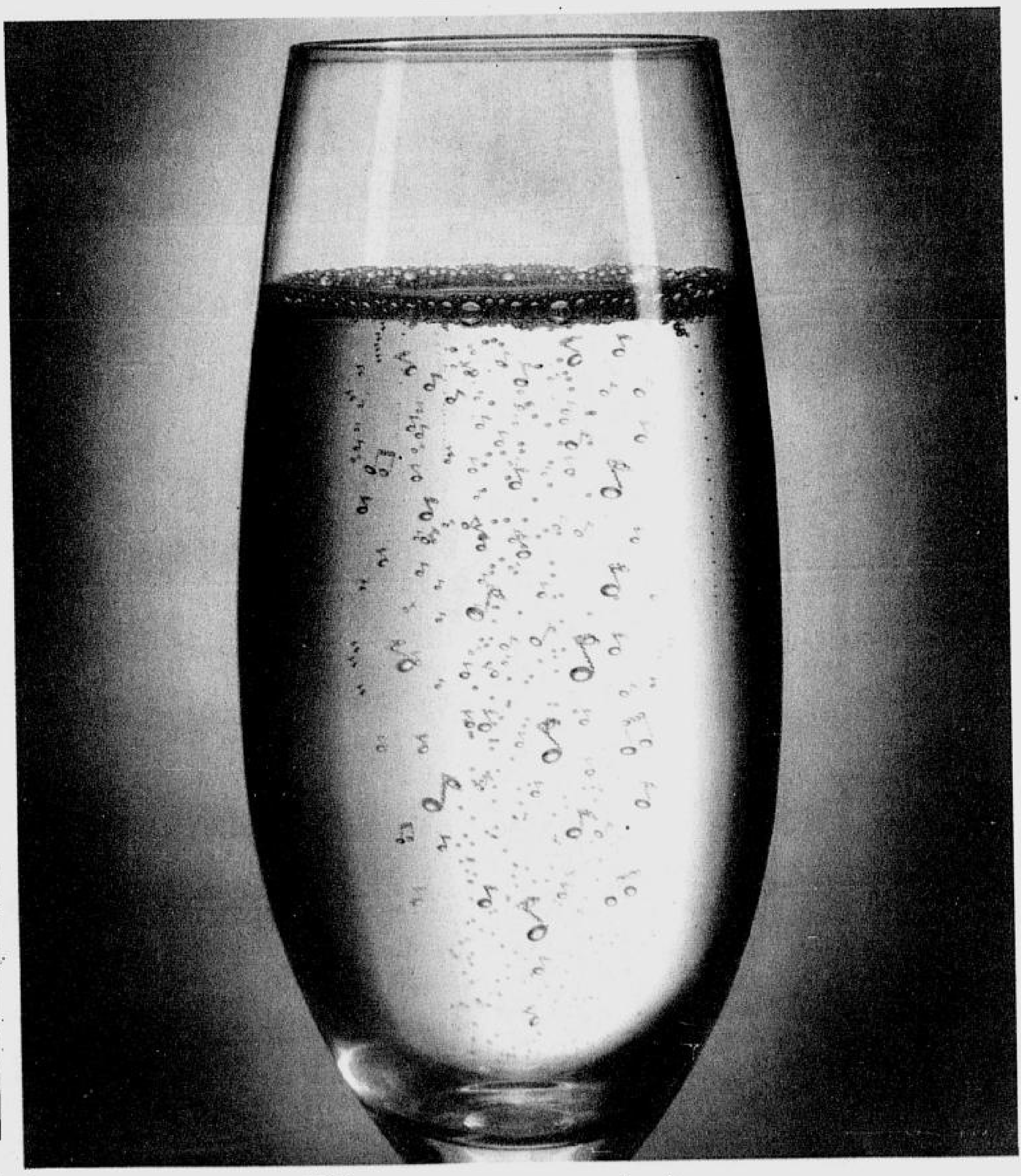
On several occasions, Philippine Airlines flights have been called off for months due to the deplorable situation of the runway.

The airport rehabilitation enhances diplomatic relations with the Organization of the Islamic Conference with Cotabato City being the temporary seat of government of ARMM.

The Awang Airport, also known as Cotabato airport, is serving Cotabato provinces, Maguindanao and Cotabato City.

Other than General Santos City, Cotabato airport is the main entry point of air travel for the ARMM and Central Mindanao.

Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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NPA rebels killed, Army soldier wounded in clash

DUMAGUETE CITY—An undetermined number of suspected New People's Army rebels were killed and an Army soldier was wounded Friday in a gunfight that broke out in Siaton River, Barangay Mantikil, Siaton, a town some 50 km south of here, since around 9:30 p.m. Thursday.

Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz, quoting Lt. Col. Rey Guerrero, commanding officer of the Army's 61st Infantry Battalion, said the government troops have not suffered any fatality but a still unidentified soldier was wounded in the clash.

Guerrero also told the governor that "many" NPA rebels were reportedly killed in the clash.

Arnaiz said the government troops were conducting a night patrol when they chanced upon the undetermined number of NPA rebels, reportedly headed by Raul Villar, alias Ka Drilon, in Siaton River.

Ka Drilon was a former cadre of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) who rejoined the NPA following his alleged involvement in the robbery and killing of four government employees of Sta. Catalina, in Bayawan City, some 104 km south of here, more than a year ago.

Arnaiz said since then Drilon, with a band of NPA rebels from Bohol, Leyte, Samar and Cebu, began operating in the hinterland villages of the southern part of Negros Oriental, especially in the towns of Siaton and Sta. Catalina.

As of noon Friday, Arnaiz said the government soldiers continued pursuing the rebels, who were bringing with them their wounded or dead comrades.

Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

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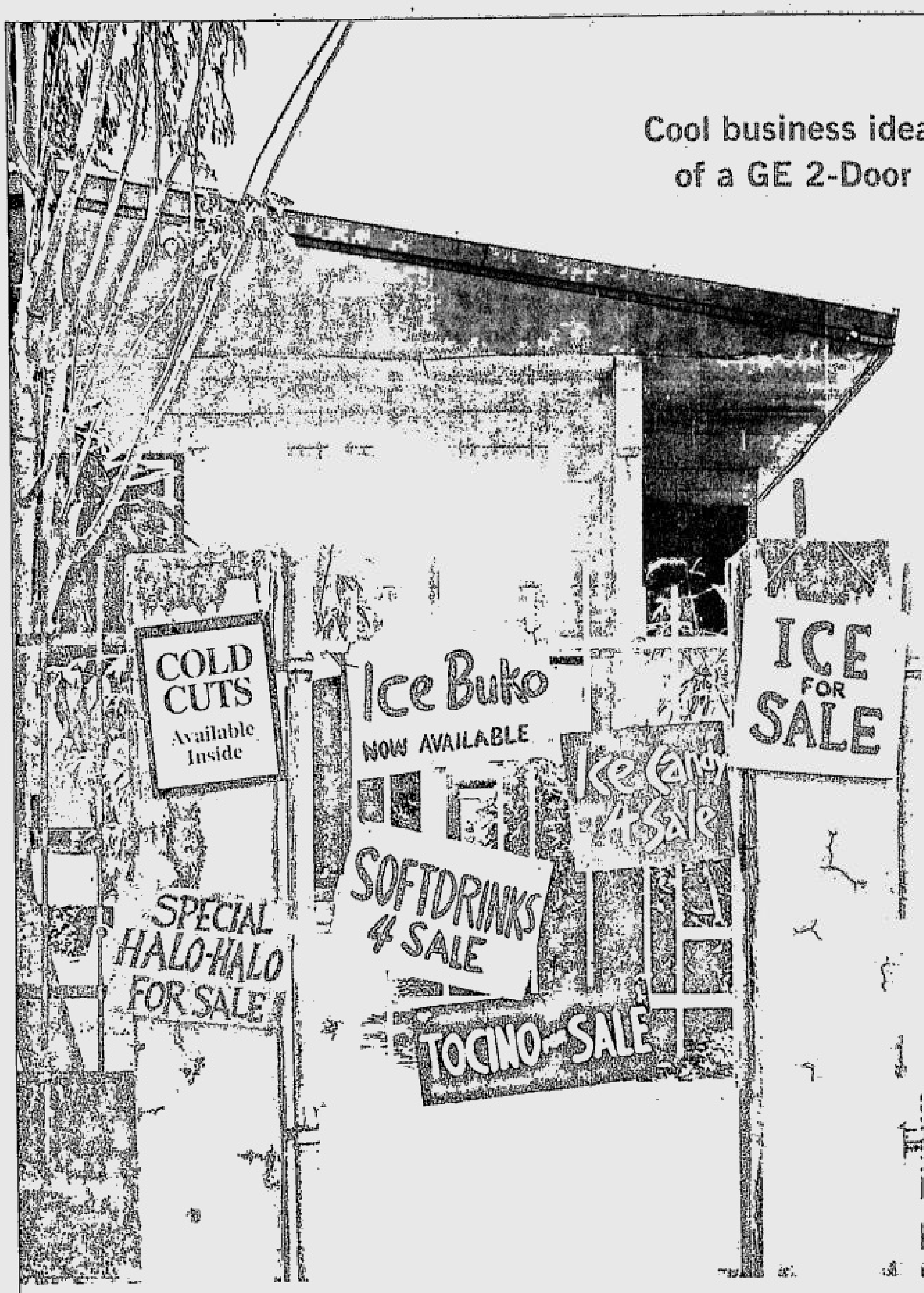

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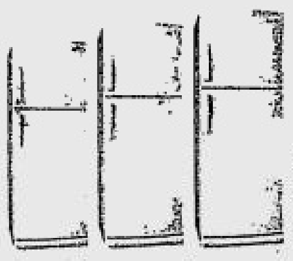
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INQUIRER Visayas

Editor Jun Bandayrel
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Siquijor villagers no longer fear the dark

By Omar O. Dumdum
Enrique Villanueva, Siquijor

EDWIN Balingit closes the windows of his house as night approaches. Not that he is afraid of the *ongo* (witch); for Siquijodnons, the creature is just a rumor made "legitimate" through generations of rumor telling.

The threat comes from the wind that devours the flame of their oil lamp.

From the mountaintop, residents of Barangay Olave were used to viewing the villages below as they glittered with light. But how this upland barangay in Enrique Villanueva, a serene town in the "Island of Fire," hooked up with voltage is another success story of a community whose progress resulted from empowerment.

Enrique Villanueva is popularly known to residents by its former name, Talingting, which is derived from a fish in the sea. A resident, called Talingtingon, also associates the name to birds that dwell on the shore and pluck out *talingting* from the sea.

In 1932, the old name was officially changed to honor the man whose efforts helped create the identity as a municipality, the late Gov. Enrique Villanueva.

Local peace and order has been described as relatively calm and peaceful. Detention cells are usually empty. There was a day in September when they were occupied not by criminals but by two wandering *"buang"* (mentally challenged persons) who were caught during a municipal campaign to send them to rehabilitation centers.

The peacefulness may also show the people's simple way of life, perhaps because they belong to the most underprivileged. According to the "Poverty Mapping and Targeting Study" conducted by Dr. Arsenio Balisacan, Rosemarie Edillon and Geoffrey Ducanes, Enrique Villanueva ranked as one of the poorest and most deprived municipalities in the country.

Aside from using the economic poverty threshold as basis for its ranking, the study listed three broad classifications of poverty indicators: quality of human capital (educational attainment, average number of household members, etc.); quality of housing and amenities (house materials and access to electricity, potable water, etc.); and accessibility conditions (state of infrastructure, farm-to-market roads, etc.)

Pilot area

In October 2001, the government requested assistance from the World Bank for its flagship program, the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (Kalahi).

The Department of Social Welfare and Development, which will conclude this year its antipoverty project called Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS), became the lead agency in implementing the new and enhanced antipoverty project, Kalahi-CIDSS: Kapangyarihan at Kaunlaran sa Barangay (KKB).

The Kalahi-CIDSS:KKB Project aims to empower local communities or barangays and improve their governance by providing fund support for basic infrastructure, training programs and other capability-building activities.

Using the Balisacan study as basis for choosing beneficiaries, the Kalahi-CIDSS: KKB Project has been initiated in 40 provinces, including Siquijor.

The first of the project's three phases began in January, with Enrique Villanueva as the first and the only target municipality in Central Visayas. The second phase, which started in July, covered Siquijor town in Siquijor and Danao town in Bohol.

The third phase, which will start next month, will include 11 more towns in Bohol—Bien Unido, Buenavista, Getafe, Talibon, Carlos P. Garcia, Trinidad, Ubay, San Miguel, Pilar, Mabini and Carmen.

With 14 villages, Enrique Villanueva receives P4.2 million in total grants from the Kalahi-CIDSS:KKB every year (cycle). Each target municipality goes through three cycles in each phase.

BAYANIHAN of the Olave people during the delivery of electric posts.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

On Jan. 6, four community development workers were deployed to Enrique Villanueva to guide the community in implementing the Kalahi-CIDSS:KKB. The project has a 16-step process in each cycle. In every step, the decision always comes from the barangay people, not from the deployed community development workers.

One of the most important steps, the ninth, which is the conduct of the first Municipal Inter-Barangay Forum (MIBF), convenes representatives from all barangays in the town for a consultative prioritization of sub-projects proposed by every barangay. The MIBF decides on which sub-project will be funded.

'Bayanihan' spirit

On April 24, the MIBF in Enrique Villanueva gave priority to three sub-projects in nine barangays. Topping the list was the electrification project of Barangay Olave.

Wilfredo Patay, the village chief, could not believe that their sub-project was chosen since he feared that Olave being an "opposition barangay" might influence the MIBF's decision.

Balingit, who chaired the project preparation team, prepared the sub-project proposal in the vernacular.

The sub-project will provide lighting to 41 households with 139 occupants in Olave and nearby Lower Parian. It can also help schoolchildren by giving them longer time to study at night, create income-generating projects apart from the residents' present livelihood of farming, extracting and fermenting coconut juice, and provide communication devices that can be used in times of disaster and emergency.

Aug. 7 marked the start of the execution of the sub-project. Men and women of Olave cleared the areas and dug holes for 19 electric posts. They also scheduled regular barangay assemblies for consultation and monitoring updates.

The total sub-project cost was estimated at P1.09 million, 44 percent of which would come from the counterpart contribution of the municipality, barangay and the Province Siquijor Electric Cooperative (Prosielco).

The switch-on ceremony was held on Oct. 14, almost a month earlier than its Nov. 4 target date of completion. Enrique Villanueva Mayor Earl Stanley Matas, Gov. Orlando B. Fua Sr., and Belma Rago, DSWD-7 Operations Division chief, attended.

Olave is also the first in the province to enjoy Prosielco's lifeline rate, a new scheme that allow consumers to pay only for how much power they used, not for a minimum number of kilowatt-hours.

Dramatic

But the most dramatic transformation of the village is its empowered people who can now decide for themselves. They no longer have to depend on politicians who always promised them electricity during election time.

During a series of capability trainings conducted by the DSWD, the residents learned the basics of accounting and bookkeeping, safeguarding community infrastructure and participatory local governance.

Presently, they are organizing the Barangay Olave Homeowner's Electric Association (Bohea), which will work hand-in-hand with Prosielco in the operations and maintenance of the power system. They plan to select an officer who will collect payment for monthly consumption from each household and remit the amount to the Prosielco office, which is 22 km away.

Balingit and the rest of the residents now enjoy the breeze that sweeps their house even at night.

OMAR O. Dumdum writes for the Kalahi-CIDSS: KKB project in Central Visayas.

Remy Ortaliz; 67

LUCID INTERVAL
Rowena V. Guanzon

NEGROS Occidental will surely miss Dr. Remy Ortaliz who died of cancer.

A physician, teacher, family life minister and advocate of women's and children's rights, Remy was president of Bulig Foundation.

Her presence was both comforting and compelling. She believed in prayer and protest. I have never seen her afraid of anyone or anything, even cancer, and she was blessed with a peaceful and painless death after her 3 o'clock prayer.

Since 1986, Remy was a prominent figure in rallies and peace advocacy. I remember her in 1989 up to 1990 when she vigorously worked for the Zone of Peace in Sitio Cantomanyog in Candoni, together with the late Bishop Emeritus Antonio Y. Fortich. In 1989 she also joined protests against Operation Thunderbolt, the Army offensive in the southern towns of Negros Occidental, which resulted to the evacuation of 33,000 local residents in Lupit Church and the death of more than 200 children.

So intense was the Catholic Church's opposition to military operations then that the military tagged church workers, some priests and even some mayors (myself included) as communists or communist coddlers. In one meeting in the provincial capitol, retired Gen. Raymundo Jarque called Remy the *"mayor-mayor sang Bactolon* (the pseudo-mayor of Bactolon)," not knowing that she was in the same room.

Instead of being intimidated, Remy continued protesting against military offensives that dislocated communities. In a bizarre turn of events, Jarque later defected to the communist-led National Democratic Front and would often see Remy in human rights events.

Remy's latest work is the program called Healthy Start, where they teach parents how to respect their children's rights in order to prevent abuse.

Remy turned 67 last Nov. 25, the start of the global 16-day campaign against Violence Against Women. For her, that was a fitting birthday gift.

***

GENDER JUSTICE AWARDS. On Nov. 25, women's groups and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) held an exhibit on violence against women in the Senate.

They lobbied for the passage of a law protecting women from abuse. The focus was once again on Sen. Ma. Luisa Ejercito, chair of the Senate committee on women, and Senate President Franklin M. Drilon, who practically wrote the Anti-Trafficking Law of 2003.

On Dec. 8, the NCRFW and the University of the Philippines' Center for Women's Studies will sponsor a "Men Speak Out Against VAW."

The Gender Justice Awards, sponsored by the United Nations Development Fund for Women, will also be launched. The awards will go to five most outstanding trial judges who rendered decisions on cases of violence against women (rape, marital rape, murder, parricide, battering, psychological and other forms of abuse in legal separation and nullity of marriage cases) in the last five years and which meet the following criteria:

- The decision must show gender sensitivity and a keen understanding of violence against women.
- It addresses the issue of discrimination against women as defined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
- The judge must not have shown insensitivity to women litigants.

Some of the decisions which will surely be nominated are the first marital rape case decided in the Regional Trial Court of Davao City and the first sexual harassment conviction in Bacolod City.

Women's organizations are strongly encouraged to send their nominations, as well as individuals and civic groups. Submission of nominations began on Nov. 25 and will end on Feb. 1, 2004.

Women lawyers in the regions will review the nominated decisions before the Board of Judges, composed of, among other persons, Sheila Coronel and Evalyn Ursua, will choose the awardees. Among the partner organizations in this project are the Legal Advocates for Women Network (Lawnet), the Women's Legal Bureau Inc., and Zonta Club of Metro Pasig, whose president is Sally Magat.

Send your nominations to the UP Center for Women's Studies, UP Diliman, Quezon City, tel/fax (02)9206880 cws@up.edu.ph mobile phone: 09228042228.

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New opposition bloc ousts Ping

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE NEWLY formed united opposition group Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino will not include Sen. Panfilo Lacson in its selection process for presidential standard-bearer in the 2004 elections after a faction of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) nominated Lacson to be its presidential bet the other day.

With Lacson's exclusion, movie actor Fernando Poe Jr., the only other presidential aspirant, would likely get KNP's endorsement, and thus, signal the split of the united opposition. The new coalition is made up of the LDP, Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) and the PDP-Laban.

LDP president Sen. Edgardo Angara, who dismissed Lacson's nomination as "illegal and unauthorized," told the INQUIRER that Lacson "took himself out of the contention" by his illegal nomination.

"No one can blame the united opposition for not considering him (Lacson)," Angara said in a phone interview.

In a statement, former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said Lacson and the LDP faction "knew and accepted the selection rules" and should have respected them but "they brazenly defied them." "Senator Lacson has thus effectively taken himself out of the selection process."

Enrile said that Lacson's nomination by a "splinter" group was "an act of unacceptable insurgency."

On Thursday, a splinter group in the LDP, claiming to represent 99 percent of the party, nominated Lacson as its presidential standard-bearer in the 2004 polls. The faction included Makati Rep. Agapito Aquino, LDP secretary general; House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla and Representatives Rolex Suplico, Abraham Mitra, Celso Lobregat and Gilbert Remulla.

Ping or FPJ: Erap faces tough choice

From page A1

Poe was willing to slide down to vice president, Estrada said this would never happen.

"How can the strongest among them slide down? What we are talking about here is winnability," Estrada said in Filipino.

But speaking after Lacson's visit, the former President appeared to have opened up to the possibility of supporting Lacson's candidacy—if Poe agreed.

"I asked him to give me time to talk to Ronnie (Poe) for them to be able to settle this among themselves," Estrada said in the phone interview.

One has to give way

"You cannot blame Ping because he has been preparing for this for so long, going all over the country to meet with his leaders, seeking support for his presidential campaign. You cannot let him back out just like that," he said.

Estrada said that in order to save the opposition's chances in the election, Poe or Lacson should give way to the other.

"It will be hard if there are two opposition candidates running for President. I told him that someone has to give (way)," he said.

In 1992, the popular Estrada gave up his presidential campaign to serve as businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco's running mate. He won, while Cojuangco lost.

Lacson issued a two-page statement recounting his meeting with Estrada.

"I told him that at this stage, especially after my supporters within and outside the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino proclaimed me as their presidential candidate, there is no more turning back," Lacson said. "I told him that the overwhelming support from various sectors and political groups which was clearly demonstrated at Club Filipino yesterday (Thursday) is a compelling reason why I should not back out from the race.

"We both agreed, however, that the unity of the opposition, especially on the ground, was necessary in order to defeat the present dispensation, and he promised to help exert all efforts toward this end," Lacson said.

Nominated but ...

Lacson was nominated the other day by a faction of the LDP as the party's standard-bearer, but LDP president Sen. Edgardo Angara dismissed the nomination as "unauthorized" and "illegal."

A group of LDP congressmen is supporting Lacson's presidential bid while other LDP leaders led by Sen. Edgardo Angara are supportive of Poe's candidacy.

In his statement, Lacson said he told Estrada that his camp had been preparing as early as last year for the presidential elections and because of this, sliding down to vice president was "out of the question."

As part of his preparations, he told the ex-President that he had spoken last February to Cojuangco about the businessman's political plans.

Lacson said he also discussed his candidacy with Poe sometime around June this year.

"(A)nd in front of Erap, Mr. Poe begged off from running and instead suggested I should be the presidential candidate of the opposition."

Hard to choose

During his talk with Lacson, Estrada said there was no discussion about any of the two candidates sliding down to vice president.

Estrada said it was hard for him to pick between the two.

"Both are my friends and *kumpadre.* (Lacson) has been with me since I was still vice president," he said of the former police official who rose to prominence as an officer of the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission.

"I hope things will resolve themselves," said Estrada.

In his statement, Lacson said he told Estrada that the surveys which showed him lagging behind "are still very tentative."

1992 race

He likened today's situation to the 1992 race, when the survey leader at that time, he said, was Senate President Jovito Salonga, who lost dismally to Fidel Ramos.

Estrada, he said, was concerned about the possibility of the administration resorting to massive cheating in the elections.

The ex-President told Lacson that Poe's popularity "will make it difficult for the administration to cheat him of his votes."

"I reasoned out that if the administration is bent on cheating, then it will cheat anybody who poses a threat to its hold (on) power, Mr. Fernando Poe Jr. included," Lacson said.

Retired generals

The senator said he assured Estrada that his camp was prepared "for whatever manipulation they undertake," as he informed him that thousands of retired soldiers and policemen, including retired generals, have vowed to help them guard the ballot boxes "to make sure that every vote for me will be counted."

"The presence of retired generals in my campaign will serve as a deterrent to the use of the AFP and PNP in cheating," he added.

Lacson said that Estrada told him that "he had yet to see the same determination from Poe since he knew from the start that he was a reluctant candidate."

Meetings canceled

"In fact, President Erap said that he tried to convince his bosom buddy to run before his name came up in the media as a possible presidential candidate but he was unsuccessful," the senator said.

He said he and Poe were originally set to meet on Wednesday but the meeting did not push through because the latter was sick with the flu.

The next meeting was set for today but was canceled anew, he said. Lacson said he had even canceled a three-day visit to Mindanao because of that meeting.

BURYING the hatchet—PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and Director Eduardo Matillano—but not in each other's backs. Anyway not with the President around, as peacemaker.

VAL HANDUMON

GMA brokers truce in PNP discord

From page A1

Ebdane's resignation for his alleged weak leadership and corruption under his watch.

But Ms Macapagal took a dig at Matillano, reminding police officials to "observe the chain of command and avoid grandstanding and laundering their complaints in public because these create a negative perception of the PNP and contribute to the demoralization in its ranks."

Mechanics for redress

She said there were mechanisms for the redress of grievances and officers should just follow due process and observe strict discipline within the police organization.

The President sealed the reconciliation by meeting with Ebdane, Matillano and other top PNP officials inside Ebdane's office at noontime. They were all smiles when they emerged from the 30-minute closed-door meeting.

Negotiations actually began Thursday night when Interior Secretary Jose Lina and Housing Secretary Michael Defensor met with Matillano and Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya at the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club.

"We're really old friends and we just played," Ebdane told reporters. "As the chief PNP, I am like a father and he is a member of the family."

Ebdane said he was told by the President to take care of the PNP; and Matillano, to support his leadership.

"He (Matillano) committed to follow the PNP chain of command after learning the reasons behind the recent reshuffle of the ranking officials of the PNP," Lina said.

Promoted

The reconciliation immediately plucked Matillano out of the floating status he had found himself in as a result of the statements he had made against the PNP chief.

Effective yesterday, he was promoted to chief of the directorate for investigation and detection management, the post he had initially refused to assume because the revamp was purportedly "faulty."

"I was just questioning the process and it's been settled so I'm accepting the position," Matillano told reporters.

The President instructed the Department of Interior and Local Government and the National Police Commission to settle all misunderstandings and grievances within the PNP ranks as a result of the top-to-bottom revamp.

Matillano had earlier claimed that the controversial reshuffle was founded on the "bata-bata system" in which officers close to Malacañang lobbied for choice positions in the PNP.

But a number of top PNP officials had told the INQUIRER that Matillano himself, along with Berroya, was among the officers closest to the President. The two, the officials claimed, had even lobbied not to be affected by the revamp.

Berroya was supposed to be replaced by Chief Supt. Alfredo de Vera but was retained indefinitely.

"Their lobbying was the very reason Ebdane could not totally implement the revamp," one official told the INQUIRER. "He could not act on his own because he had to follow orders from Malacañang."

Galang's appointment

Ebdane yesterday explained the appointment of Director Enrique Galang which had annoyed Matillano and Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco, sacked chief of the National Capital Region Police Office.

Galang, he said, got the powerful PNP No. 4 post owing to his competence and because the other choice, Director Ricardo de Leon, chose to assume the NCRPO post over the Chief of Directorial Staff position.

Galang, a member of Philippine Military Academy Class 1972, was an underclassman of Matillano, Velasco and De Leon, who were a batch ahead of him.

Wasted funds

But Matillano's complaints did not exclusively involve the revamp.

He claimed that "20-25 percent" of the PNP's funds had been going to "waste" in construction projects, with some even going to the pockets of some members of the "comptroller family."

"That has to be addressed," Ebdane said. "But as far as I'm concerned, I don't interfere (with the funds). There are a lot of constructions but I see to it that they are done in remote places, especially in stations which had been attacked by the NPA and the MILF."

Senate reaction

In the Senate, a former police officer and interior secretary told warring PNP officials to stop "washing their dirty linen in public" because it was causing demoralization among the ranks.

Instead of engaging in a word war before the media and the public, Barbers urged Matillano and those dissatisfied with the revamp ordered by Ebdane to utilize the PNP's grievance mechanism to protest their reassignments.

"The PNP has its own mechanism to address these grievances. They should go through this process," said Barbers, who rose from the ranks as a patrolman until he left the service to run for public office.

In the same breath, Barbers offered to settle the dispute between Matillano et al. and Edbane, saying he was willing to serve as a go-between to patch up their differences.

Asked about the grievances of the police generals in resisting the revamp, Barbers said: "There might be truth to their complaints. That's why I'm asking them to lodge their grievances before the proper forum."

"In fairness," he said, "Matillano is a very effective officer."

Guardians' support

In Calamba City, a faction of the Guardians Brotherhood that recognizes Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan as its leader yesterday supported Matillano's allegations of graft and corruption.

Ernesto Macahiya, national spokesman of the Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. (PGBI), hailed Matillano's act of divulging the alleged politicking and corruption in the PNP.

He likened Matillano's act to the idealism of the Magdalo officers who led the Oakwood mutiny that exposed graft and corruption in the armed forces.

But Senior Supt. Napoleon Cachuela, director for administration of the Calabarzon police command, yesterday said Matillano should learn to respect the PNP as an institution and remain committed to it in spite of personal differences.

Professional

He said it was unfortunate that Matillano, a Philippine Military Academy Class 1971 graduate had forgotten what they had learned in the academy about loyalty.

"We are trained to be professional police officers. We should work for the people and abide by the PNP organization where we swore allegiance. We should follow and work. No more, no less," Cachuela, a member of PMA Class 1975, said.

Ranking officials of the Calabarzon and Mimaropa regional police offices yesterday denied reports that several of their senior and junior officers had gone on mass leave after the rift between the top officers of the PNP.

Both police offices likewise expressed their full support for Ebdane. *With reports from Nelson Flores; Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Gov't calls in Marines in anti-kidnap campaign

From page A1

would focus on heavily tinted vehicles, those with no license plates, and those whose plates do not match the vehicles' registration papers.

"The conduct of the checkpoint will be done in a very courteous but stern manner and these checkpoints would not in any way inconvenience the public," Reyes told reporters. "We are after criminal elements so we need to solicit everybody's support and understanding."

At checkpoints, Reyes said, military officers would be tapped to deal with armed people wearing military uniforms, while policemen would be asked to accost armed motorists who misrepresent themselves as PNP officers.

Recent successes

The new security measures will be implemented after the NAKTF scored recent successes in the campaign to stop kidnap-for-ransom gangs.

Naga was rescued by the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer) team in an encounter in Paliparan Tres, Dasmariñas, Cavite, at around 2:30 p.m. One of the suspects was killed while his two companions were arrested and brought to NAKTF headquarters in Camp Crame for interrogation, said Supt. Rodel Sermonia, Dasmariñas city police chief.

The 43-year-old Naga, a breeder of K-9 dogs and a resident of San Pablo City in Laguna, was abducted near the SM Centerpoint in Sta. Mesa, Manila, last Wednesday. Sermonia could not say if ransom had been paid prior to the NAKTF operation.

Naga's rescue came a day after the release of the 10-year-old Chinese-Filipino girl who was kidnapped in Paco, Manila, last Nov. 21.

Kidnappers 1, 4, 5

A few hours after the release, police arrested Allan Niegas, the fourth most wanted kidnapper in the NAKTF list, in Leyte. The No. 5 most wanted, ex-Army officer Vilmor Catamco, was arrested in Masbate three days earlier.

Niegas and Catamco were presented to the President at the press briefing in Camp Crame.

The No. 1 kidnapper, medical doctor Roberto Obeles Yap, was killed in an encounter in Dinalupihan, Bataan, on Nov. 20.

Last Wednesday, police killed six alleged car thieves who had run into a checkpoint in Manila. Ms Macapagal said one of the slain suspects was among those involved in the kidnapping of the children of Negros Rep. Jules Ledesma last year.

P5-million ransom

Unidentified men who commandeered an, Isuzu Crosswind abducted Naga on Dec. 3.

That same day, his family received a phone call from a certain Armand who demanded P5 million in ransom.

The vehicle was later found abandoned near the Mandaluyong City Hall.

The victim's wife, Elsa, said there were negotiations but no ransom was paid.

A pistol was recovered from the suspects.

The victim had a tearful homecoming with his wife and 7-year-old daughter Joelle at the NAKTF headquarters at Camp Crame at around 6 p.m.

"I now understand what families of other kidnap victims have gone through," Elsa said.

The President and Reyes, a former defense secretary, witnessed the reunion.

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METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Another shabu lab uncovered in Pasig

By Christian Esguerra

POLICE yesterday busted another illegal drugs laboratory containing huge volumes of shabu ingredients and the most sophisticated shabu-making equipment ever discovered in the country.

Armed by a search warrant, members of the Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force (AID SOTF) raided a warehouse at Building 4-C within the Saniware Compound on Evangelista Street in Santolan, Pasig City at around 10 a.m.

Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay, AID SOFT chief, said the laboratory could manufacture around 700 to 1,000 kilos of high-grade shabu daily, owing to the massive equipment found at the warehouse.

It had a heavy duty laboratory mixer, a high-capacity regulator, a dryer which was nearly two meters in diameter, 21 units of extended hydrogen gas tanks, and a huge smokestack.

"The equipment have never been seen in the country before," Aglipay told reporters.

He said the smokestack was used to filter the foul odor coming out of the warehouse.

Besides the equipment, Aglipay and his men also found key ingredients in the manufacture of shabu. They included acetone, thionyl chloride, sodium hydroxide, activated charcoal, 98 sacks of off-white powder, glacial acetic acid, 32 multiple-gallon containers of dark brown liquid, and other chemicals kept in several containers.

Though no suspect had been arrested during the raid, Aglipay said police would file charges against Willy Gan and Aileen Tan, who had leased the warehouse from Cityland Inc.

Quoting security guards assigned at the compound, Aglipay said the occupants usually refused inspection whenever they brought in cargo inside the warehouse.

Aglipay said information about the warehouse came from one of the suspects arrested when the AID SOTF intercepted huge volumes of shabu ingredients at the port area in Manila last week.

The informer told police that the chemicals were to be stocked at the Pasig warehouse.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo with (from left) Senior Insp Nestor Ylagan, Deputy Gen. Edgardo Aglipay, and Pasig Mayor Soledad Eusebio examine the sacks containing ingredients for illegal drugs in a warehouse on Evangelista Street, Pasig City. Inset, a police official opens one of the drug cannisters shortly after the raid.

JOAN BONDOC

Gun ban to start Dec. 15 as police gear up for polls

By Edson Tandoc Jr. and Leila Salaverria

ELECTION season will officially start for the Philippine National Police on Dec. 15 as it starts enforcing the national gun ban.

In a memorandum, the National Capital Region Police Office ordered the five police districts in Metro Manila to draw up plans for the national elections next year.

The memorandum told district directors to draw up measures to implement the ban on firearms and other deadly weapons from Dec. 15 to June 9, 2004.

Among the measures indicated in the order is the setting up of mobile checkpoints.

Resolution No. 6420 of the Commission on Elections state that deadly weapons are banned 147 days before the elections on May 10, 2004, and 30 days after.

Even licensed firearms or those with permits to carry would be banned unless the owner gets an authorization from the Comelec.

The police districts have also been directed to set up election monitoring and assistance centers in their respective headquarters.

The police were also told to update their list of areas of concern where "election-related offenses were committed during the previous elections."

Officials said this would aid the police in planning for deployment of police checkpoints during the election period.

Meanwhile, the Manila's Finest Brotherhood Association, Inc., yesterday criticized PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane and former Criminal Investigation and Detection Group head Eduardo Matillano for fighting in public.

"They should resolve their differences because their word war would not help the PNP's image," SP02 Antonio Emmanuel, MFBAI spokesperson said.

Emmanuel said the PNP leaders should be the ones to set an example for their subordinates to follow.

He however said Manila policemen were affected much by the feud between Ebdane and Matillano, who were forced to shake hands yesterday by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The group is more concerned with the PNP system and how it affects our members," Emmanuel said. "We do not focus as much on personalities."

The reconciliation between the two police officials is seen to help put the PNP on track for securing next year's polls.

High court urged to sack judge in Kuratong case

By Philip Tubeza

THE PROSECUTORS in the Kuratong Baleleng case yesterday formally asked the Supreme Court to sack Quezon City Judge Ma. Theresa Yadao for her alleged biased acts in favor of the accused in the case, including the tampering of court records.

Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuno led the filing of the 29-page complaint against Yadao before the Office of the Court Administrator of the Supreme Court. The prosecutors asked the tribunal to immediately suspend Yadao and investigate her for dishonesty, conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service, manifest partiality, and knowingly rendering an unjust judgement.

The prosecutors are railing against Yadao for dismissing on Nov. 12 the murder charges against Sen. Panfilo Lacson and 33 others in the Kuratong Baleleng case for "lack of probable cause."

The prosecution said that there is overwhelming evidence in the case that would even merit the conviction of the accused. They have asked Yadao to inhibit herself from the case.

The prosecution also accused Yadao of falsifying the transcript of stenographic notes pertaining to the Oct. 17 hearing on the case.

The prosecutors said that on Oct. 17, Yadao walked out of the hearing. Yet according to the official transcript, Yadao issued an order in open court.

PDEA exec, 2 others rapped for shooting NBI field man

By Leila Salaverria

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday filed frustrated murder and theft charges against three agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, including a police superintendent, for shooting an NBI agent in Marikina City.

The three PDEA agents were identified as Senior Supt. Orlando Mabutas, P03 Norman Jesus Platon and P03 Sherwin Bulan, all members of the Special Enforcement Service. They were charged before the Marikina Prosecutor's Office.

Platon and Bulan earlier surrendered to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police.

The PDEA agents were accused of shooting and wounding Special Investigator Marvin Matamis, a member of the NBI's Intelligence Special Operations Division, and taking away the victim's firearm, wallet and badge in Marikina on Nov. 24.

Agents of the NBI's National Capital Region Division said Matamis would recover, but he would have to be fitted with a steel plate inside his left leg to replace the shattered bones.

The Isod agent is still recuperating in an undisclosed hospital. Agents privy to the case said a witness to the shooting incident has been receiving threats and is fearing for his life.

A witness earlier told NBI investigators that Matamis was just seeking the help of a traffic enforcer regarding an abusive FX taxi driver when the suspects appeared and initially accused the enforcer of extorting money from the agent.

But after the enforcer denied this, the suspects introduced themselves as PDEA agents, which prompted Matamis to identify himself as a member of the NBI.

Matamis then told investigators that when he introduced himself, the PDEA agents grew angry and a fight ensued. The PDEA agents allegedly shot Matamis and took his gun, wallet and badge before fleeing on board a white Toyota Revo.

NCRPO runs up ₱25-M power bill; official blames it on budget deficit

WESTERN Police District officials recently issued an unusual order to their men—conserve on water and power use.

That is because the unpaid water and electricity bills of the National Capital Region Police Office have already amounted to P25 million, according to a memo on display at the WPD headquarters.

The utility bills of all police districts in Metro Manila are paid for by the NCRPO.

A police official yesterday told the INQUIRER that the government's lack of cash allocation is part of the reason why the NCRPO has been incurring debts in its water, phone and electric bills.

The official, who refused to be named, explained that in the budget appropriated for the police, there are amounts that would have gone to the payment of power and water utilities. But he said the actual cash given to the police is either short of the appropriation or delayed.

Due to the limited cash allocation, the police, just like other government agencies, tend to prioritize expenses. The official said the policemen and personnel's salaries and benefits always come first.

WATER
ELECTRIC
BILL
₱25M

In a Nov. 27 memo, WPD logistics head Supt. Abad Osit said policemen must implement measures to stop the "alarming increase" in the monthly water and electricity bills of the headquarters, police stations and precincts in Manila.

But another police official from the NCRPO denied the debt has reached P25 million. However, the official has yet to confirm the exact figure. *Leila Salaverria, Edson Tandoc Jr.*

MMDA to implement bus scheme–for real

By Margaux Ortiz

THIS time, it's serious.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority officials have warned bus operators and drivers that they are not conducting any more dry runs for the Organized Bus Route, or single dispatch system.

"The full implementation of the OBR on Monday will be the real thing," MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said.

"Hardheaded bus drivers and operators will face severe penalties," he stressed.

Vergel de Dios said the MMDA will deploy its entire force of 2,500 traffic enforcers on Edsa if needed.

He also said that they have added 40 more dispatchers to the original 100 to control the number of buses plying Edsa.

"We need to ensure the scheme's success this time," Vergel de Dios said.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando had promised bus operators earlier this week that after one month of assessment, the agency would scrap the program if it fails to solve Edsa's traffic woes.

Fernando also promised to lift the number-coding scheme for buses after the month-long assessment—whether or not the OBR succeeds.

Vergel de Dios said that the lack of cooperation and support from bus operators and drivers had caused the past OBR dry runs to fail.

He said most of Edsa's 6,000 bus drivers were not aware of the new scheme because of lack of coordination with their operators.

To solve the problem, the drivers were made to go through half-day seminars on the basic rules and regulations of the bus scheme.

Vergel de Dios said that without certificates of completion to show to dispatchers, the drivers would not be allowed to ply their routes.

The MMDA would also be stricter about the queue cards they would distribute to the bus drivers, Vergel de Dios said.

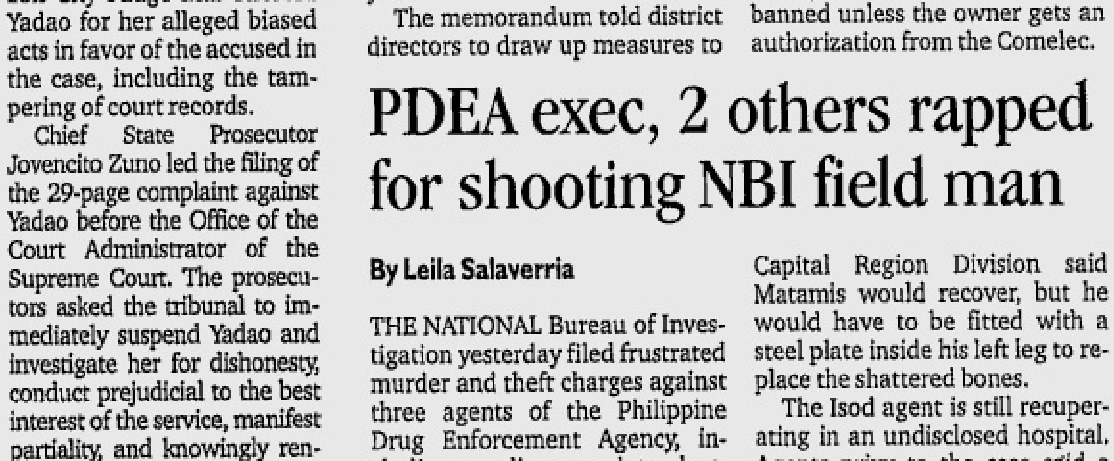
The queue cards are issued to bus drivers when they leave their terminals. The cards ensure that the buses do not overtake each other and move systematically in single file on Edsa's yellow lane.

Vergel de Dios said the drivers were not aware of the queue cards' importance during the scheme's dry runs.

He said that out of the 1,000 queue cards they distributed, only a few ones made their way back to the MMDA.

"These few ones even had expletives written on them, directed against the MMDA," the traffic chief said.

Vergel de Dios warned drivers that those who failed to return their queue cards would be slapped with a P1,000 fine for the first offense. On the second offense, their bus would be impounded, he said.



DEATH PENALTY ADVOCATES GET THEIR WISH

In this file photo, sympathizers of slain kidnap victim Betti Sy carry banners demanding death to kidnappers during a funeral procession in Manila. Sy, a 32-year-old executive of Coca-Cola, was killed shortly after she was abducted. President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday yielded to the clamor of anti-crime groups and reimposed the death penalty beginning January.

AFP

WPD relents, gives bonus to 200 cops

By Leila B. Salaverria

CHRISTMAS won't be blue for 200 erring Western Police District lawmen after all.

WPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong yesterday ordered the release of their yearend bonus, which was earlier withheld as penalty for minor administrative offenses they had committed.

"I requested that the policemen be given some consideration, and that their forfeiture of pay as penalty be implemented on a staggered basis," Bulaong told the INQUIRER.

"It's all in the spirit of Christmas," he added.

The 200 policemen, all members of the Manila's Finest Brotherhood Association, Inc. (MFBAI), had complained that the forfeiture was being implemented on top of the earlier forfeiture of their pay as penalty for administrative offenses they had committed.

The policemen said this was unfair because it was not supported by National Police Commission (Napolcom) policy.

But while Bulaong ordered the release of the yearend cash gift, he lectured the policemen about performing their duties so that they would not be slapped with administrative charges.

He told them not to forget that they were required to attend formations, should not be late for work, and should not be absent without leave.

Bulaong pointed out that they would not have suffered forfeiture of bonus had they performed their duties.

"I hope this time they learned a lesson," the WPD chief said.

MFBAI spokesperson SP02 Antonio Emmanuel welcomed Bulaong's decision because it meant the affected lawmen would be bringing home a little extra for the holidays.

But he said the PNP should not have withheld the Christmas bonus in the first place because it was not authorized by any Napolcom policy.

Emmanuel explained that only salaries could be forfeited as penalty.

Lawmen foil rob; 6 nabbed

By Tina Santos

THE POLICE scored anew yesterday afternoon after they foiled a payroll robbery in Quezon City and arrested six alleged remnants of a notorious robbery group.

Intelligence agents of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) and Central Police District, backed up by the CPD Special Weapons and Tactics team and Baler Station 2 men, apprehended the suspects after the latter attempted to pull a robbery at the Power Squad Security Agency at Rizalina Building on Quezon Avenue corner Edsa at about 2:30 p.m.

NCRPO chief Ricardo de Leon declined to identify the suspects but said these were members of the Paracale crime group.

"We still could not disclose the identities of the suspects because of operational details. All I can say is that they are engaged in robbery operations," De Leon told reporters.

De Leon told the INQUIRER that policemen went to the scene after receiving information about suspicious-looking men in a blue Kia Besta van roaming the area.

Initial reports said six men had swooped on the security agency's office but failed to pull off the heist when the policemen arrived.

The police recovered two .38-caliber revolvers, high-powered firearms and a grenade, which the suspects allegedly dumped in a nearby vacant lot.

Five of the agency's security guards were also invited to the NCRPO headquarters to give statements.

Two men, on board a parked black Mitsubishi Delica were also invited by CPD operatives for questioning.

But De Leon clarified that the security guards and two men in the Delica were not suspects.

He said they were merely invited to shed light on the investigation.

Xmas not for cats, dogs in Navotas

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

CHILDREN planning to go caroling in Navotas would not have to worry about being chased away by stray dogs because chances are there won't be any.

Over the last two weeks, the town's Agriculture Office has been going around town and catching stray canines and even vagrant cats.

These are locked up in the hope that their owners would come by and pay for their release. If not retrieved in three days, these are put to sleep through lethal injection.

Pet owners retrieving stray cats or dogs for the first time would have to pay P50. Released pets which again go stray and are caught a second time will have to be retrieved for P500.

Agriculture Office chief Joebe Gonzales said they conduct daily rounding up operations in public places in compliance with a three-year-old ordinance.

The ordinance, which created the Task Force Galang Hayop, aims to prevent the spread of diseases like rabies.

Gonzales said they used to allow strangers to adopt captured pets but had stopped because many of the animals ended up as food or appetizers in drinking sprees.

METROBRIEFS

No overloading

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) yesterday warned truck owners and drivers that it would impound overloaded vehicles. MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said past incidents of overloaded trucks breaking down in critical points like underpasses and flyovers had caused heavy traffic. He said the MMDA would be installing weigh bridges that would be used to determine overloaded trucks. *Margaux Ortiz*

Grenade attack

ARSENCIO Saquilayan and Teddy Fuentes, both of Makati City, and Mary Ann Magbatuc and Constancio Columna, both of Pasay City, were wounded when a man hurled a grenade at them late Thursday night in Makati City. They were having a drinking spree along Lacuna Street at 7:45 p.m. when the unidentified suspect struck. *Penny Rose Quiton, Tomnie Mae Susa and Beverly Casette Torralba*

3 CPD cops charged

THE OFFICE of the Ombudsman yesterday recommended the filing of criminal charges against SP01s Arturo Cortez and Rodolfo Limin, and P02 Bernardo Amigo of the Central Police District for the illegal arrest of a businessman five months ago. A preliminary investigation found prima facie evidence to support the complaint of trespassing and robbery-extortion of Mary Jane Tarala, of Kapatiran Street, Quezon City. *Tina Santos*

Save a marriage

RETROUVAILLE, a Catholic healing ministry, offers hope to couples whose marriages are falling apart. Retrouvaille (French for rediscovery) helps husbands and wives with troubled marriages regain a loving relationship. The program consists of a live-in weekend and six follow-up afternoon sessions. Retrouvaille has set another weekend from Dec. 12 to 14 at the SAID Formation House in Antipolo City. The follow-up sessions will be held in Quezon City. For inquiries, call Fr. Soc Mesiona at 524-2977; Willie and Aleth Fernandez at 800-5902; and Ike and Flor Carlos at 718-0689.

Revamp shows indiscipline at PNP

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE CURRENT revamp at the Philippine National Police (PNP) shows that even ranking police officials are undisciplined. Several of those adversely affected by the reshuffle didn't want to budge from their positions.

If those at the top of the PNP totem pole are undisciplined, what can you expect from those in the lower echelon?

* * *

The government has lately been scoring against kidnapping with the arrest or killing of leaders and members of kidnap-for-ransom gangs.

The reward system recently put up has done its job. People who inform on kidnappers are given handsome rewards. As much as P1 million is given for the capture, dead or alive, of notorious kidnappers.

Had they done this before, the ranks of kidnappers would have dwindled long ago.

Anyway, even if the reward system was late in coming, still many kidnappers will fall. Money moves people.

* * *

If the case of my friend, Wally Sombero, against Ford Philippines is to be an indication, the much-ballyhooed Ford Explorer and Ford Expedition are lemons. And Ford Motor Co. doesn't want to take responsibility for its cars' factory defect.

Sombero was a Ford sport utility vehicle (SUV) fanatic. He bought two Ford SUVs, Expedition and Explorer because they looked tough. He thought that since the US pioneered in car-making, American-made Ford must be tops in quality. He now thinks otherwise; he thinks that Japanese cars are far superior.

What made Sombero change his mind about Ford SUVs?

* * *

On Aug. 17, 2003, Sombero's new Ford Explorer Sport Trac 4x4 conked out after negotiating in the middle of a flooded street in Metro Manila. The other vehicles, the ubiquitous Pinoy jeepney and much cheaper Toyota Revo, went through the flooded street.

Sombero took the Explorer to the Ford Libis shop in Quezon City to have it checked. Without consulting him, the shop dismantled the vehicle and charged him P110,000 for it.

My friend protested because he only wanted to know from Ford why such a sturdy-looking and expensive SUV would conk out on a low flood while other cheaper vehicles would go through.

* * *

"In dismantling my car, Mon, they probably were hiding its factory defect and wanted me to pay more for the car," said Sombero, a retired policeman who's now working for a big business firm.

He protested with Ford Libis, but he was not listened to. He then wrote the main Ford office in the US. Still, his complaint was ignored. Up to now, there has been no action on his complaint.

"I am hoping that if my complaint is publicized, Ford Motors might act on my complaint," Sombero said in a letter to this writer.

* * *

Sombero is not the first Ford SUV owner to complain against Ford Libis. In fact, he is the third.

A Chinoy friend complained to me two years ago that his newly-bought Ford Expedition kept conking out. He said he took his Expedition to Ford Libis, but it could not find out what was wrong with the SUV.

Another friend who owned a Ford Expedition told me that six months after he bought the car, he heard clanking sounds from its underside. This friend has sold the Expedition and bought a Japanese-made SUV.

What's the moral of the above-item? Before planning to buy an Expedition, think twice.

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SEA GAMES

Archers nail down first gold

By Ernesto Gonzales

22nd SEA GAMES
VIET NAM
2003

JASMIN Figueroa takes aim at the target during the finals of the women's archery team competition.

EDWIN BACASMAS

HANOI—This time, the arrows flew straight and true as the female archers gave the Philippines its first gold medal Friday in the 22nd Southeast Asian Games here.

Overshadowed by their male counterparts in the first three days of action at the National Sports Training Center, Jasmin Figueroa, Rachelle Anne Cabral and Jennifer Chan delivered on the final day of the event at the expense of Malaysia, 218-211.

The Filipinas, who finished third in the eliminations, earlier eliminated Thailand, 230-195, at the start of the head-to-head duels, then nosed out top-seed Indonesia, 226-224, in the semifinals.

The Filipino bowmen, who seemed in prime position for a gold after ruling the eliminations and drawing a bye in the Olympic round, again bowed to pressure and settled for the bronze medal in the team competition.

Led by Florante Matan, the men's individual bronze medalist, the RP archers floundered in their semifinal match againt Malaysia, 244-231, and had to beat Thailand, 236-218, for the bronze.

Jubilation swept the Filipino camp after news of the victory of the Pinay archers broke out before lunch.

With archery's 1-gold, 2-bronze output, Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit said the performance could serve as inspiring kickoff to the countrys's drive to improve on its fifth place overall finish two years ago in Malaysia.

Dayrit, along with First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and IOC representative Frank Elizalde, was on hand when the Filipinas, after a slow start, exploded past Malaysia and made sure they won't finish without one of four golds up for grabs.

"*Hindi talaga kami papayag na ma*-shutout (We can't accept a gold medal shutout)," said archery secretary general Lig'aya Manalang, noting that the Filipinos also took the women's individual gold through Purita Joy Marina in KL in 2001.

The small Filipino gallery was on pins and needles as Malaysia won the first end, 74-68, and maintained its lead, 139-145, after the second.

But the RP trio responded in the third end and finished off the Malaysians with an even more explosive performance in the fourth end to clinch the gold by seven points.

Matan, who succumbed to pressure in the semifinals of the individual race, Marvin Cordero and Arnold Rojas just could not summon their fiery forms in the eliminations.

After eliminating the Filipinos, the Malaysians went all the way to finish as the top nation in the event with 2 golds. The other gold went to Indonesia in the women's individual division.

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GSX	790,000	118,500	57,303	39,515	31,441	22,589	18,468	15,690
GLX	750,000	112,500	54,220	37,389	29,752	21,376	17,475	14,846
GL	678,000	101,700	48,670	33,562	26,710	19,190	15,089	13,326
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Kiamco-Corteza strikes paydirt

By Roy Luarca

HO CHI MINH City—As expected, the touted cue artists delivered.

Favorites Lee Van Corteza and Warren Kiamco pooled their talents last night to rule the 9-ball pool doubles, 9-3, at the expense of the Malaysians and produce the Filipinos' first gold in the billiards and snookers competitions in the 22nd Southeast Asian Games.

Earlier, the women's archery team scored the breakthrough victory for Team Philippines in Hanoi, where most of the events are being held.

The 24-year-old Corteza is also the 9-ball gold medalist in the 1999 Brunei SEAG and 8-ball champion in the 2001 Kuala Lumpur edition, while the 33-year-old Kiamco also has a gold to show in the 15-ball of the Malaysia edition.

"We dedicate this victory to our countrymen back home," said Corteza and Kiamco, both veterans of international competitions.

En route to the finals, the Corteza-Kiamco duo beat the Vietnamese pair of Nguyen Phuc Long and Nguyen Than Nam, 9-5.

The Malaysian tandem of Tan Kah Thiam and Ibrahim Amir beat the Indonesians in their own semifinal duel.

The RP billiards and snookers team, powered by Efren "Bata" Reyes and Francisco "Django" Bustamante, is predicted to snare a minimum of two golds and a maximum of five.

Reyes, a Hall-of-Famer, is slated to take part in four events, including the 9-ball, where he and Bustamante are the prohibitive favorites.

The two well-known Filipinos are coming off strong performances in recent international competitions, including the first Philippine Open in Manila, where Reyes wound up second behind former world champion Mika Immonen of Finland, and Bustamante third.

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Philippines	2	0	3	5
Indonesia	1	2	2	5
Thailand	1	0	1	2
Vietnam	1	0	0	1
Singapore	0	2	0	2
East Timor	0	0	0	0
Laos	0	0	0	0
Myanmar	0	0	0	0
Brunei	0	0	0	0
Cambodia	0	0	0	0

RP SCHEDULE

Saturday, December 6

HANOI

Cycling: Hoan Kiem Lake
9 a.m.—30.6km Women's Criterium (Final)—Lakambini Alto, Ani Karina de Leon, Marita del Rosario and Katherine Lopez
10:45 a.m.—51km Men's Criterium—Alfie Catalan, Paterno Curtan, Paulo Manapul and Merculio Ramos Jr.

Women's Football: Thien Truong
3 p.m.—Philippines vs Vietnam

Swimming: National Aquatic Sports Center
9 a.m.—10-m freestyle (women), 200-m backstroke (men and women), 400-m individual medley (men) and 200-m individual medley (women), all heats

Gymnastics: Hanoi Sports Palace
2 p.m.—individual all-around finals (men and women)—Ruel Ramirez, Neil Faustino, Phoebe Espiritu, Emilie Christa Santos

Karatedo: Gia Lam Gymnasium
9 a.m.—Women's team kumite elimination up to semifinals Philippines (Gretchen Malalad, Marna Pabillore, Adora Aquino and Normalyn Lagman) vs Vietnam
10 a.m.—Men's team kumite elimination up to semifinals Philippine (Junel Perania, Bernardino Chu, Nelson Co, Nelson Pacalso, Jose Mari Pabillore, Ireneo Toribio and Sugar Ray Metanio) vs Brunei

11 a.m.—Men's team kata elimination up to repechage Philippines (noel Espinosa, Marlou Ranoa and Franklin Kawaen) vs Myanmar
12 nn—Women's team kata elimination up to repechage Philippines (Cherli Tugday, Lily May Pacubas and Gemma Payacda) vs Thailand
2:30 p.m.—Women's individual kumite elimination up to repechage 48kg: Adora Aquino vs Y.H. Thawng Luai, Myanmar
—Men's individual kumite elimination up to repechage 70kg: Junel Perania vs Vu Quoc Huy (Vietnam)

Rowing: West Lake
9 a.m.—Light men's single scull (Jose Rodriguez), light men's pair (Alvin Amposta/Nestor Cordova), all finals

Shooting: National Sports Training Center 1
9 a.m.—10-m air pistol, 60 shots (men's finals)—Gilbert Escobar, Carolino Gonzales, Marcelo Gonzales
—25-m sport pistol (women, finals)—Therese Cantada, Susan Aguada

Sepak Takraw: Hai Ba Trung Competition Hall
8 a.m.—Circle finals, men and women

Volleyball: Nam Dinh/NinhBinh Halls
2 p.m.—Thailand vs Philippines (women)
7 p.m.—Thailand vs Philippine (men)

HAISHUNG

Table Tennis: Hai Duong Gymnasium
9 a.m.—men's and women's team, first stage

HO CHI MINH

Tennis: Lan Anh Club—Dist. 10
9 a.m.—Individual Rapid, Round 7 (men, women's semifinals)
Rogelio Antonio Jr./Buenaventura Villamayor, Cristine Mariano/Sherry Joy Lomibao/Beverly Mendoza or Cristine Mariano/Beverly Mendoza
4:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m. Team Rapid, Rounds 1 to 3 (men's and women's eliminations)
Rogelio Antonio Jr., Jayson Gonzales, Mark Paragua, Eugenio Torre, Buenaventura Villamayor
Arianne Caoili, Kathryn Ann Cruz, Sherrie Joy Lomibao, Christine Mariano, Beverly Mendoza

Billiards and Snooker: Nguyen Su Sports Center
10 a.m.—Snooker Doubles (for bronze)
3-cushion carom singles (for bronze)
3-cushion carom singles (for gold)

Note: RP participation depends on results in the earlier rounds

Bodybuilding: Ben Thanh Competition Hall
4-4:45 p.m.—Roman Cortuna Jr., bantamweight (65kg), finals
4:45-5:30 p.m.—Jose Bautista, lightweight (70kg), finals
5:30-6:15 p.m.—Armando Villasoto, welterweight (75kg), finals
6:15-7p.m.—Alfredo Trazona, light middleweight (80kg), finals
7:45-8:30 p.m.—Angelito Llora, light heavyweight (90kg), finals

Judo: Lan Binh Thang Competition Hall
3 p.m.—Franco Teves (up to 55kg), Aristotle Lucero (up to 60kg), Helen Dawa (up to 45kg), Nancy Quillotes (up to 48kg), qualifying round

Badminton: Tan Binh Indoor Stadium
6:30 p.m.—team matches, men/women (elimination, quarterfinals)
Arolas Amahit, Kennevic Asuncion, Lloyd Escoses, Melvin Llanes, Ian Gil Piencenaves (men's team), Kennie Asuncion, Rachel Guerrero, Racquel Guerrero, Paula Obanana (women's team)

Boxing: Phan Dinh Phung Stadium
7 p.m.—Harry Tañamor vs Zamzai Mohamad, Malaysia (up to 48kg)
Joan Tipon vs Chanthasona Exayyalak (up to 54kg)

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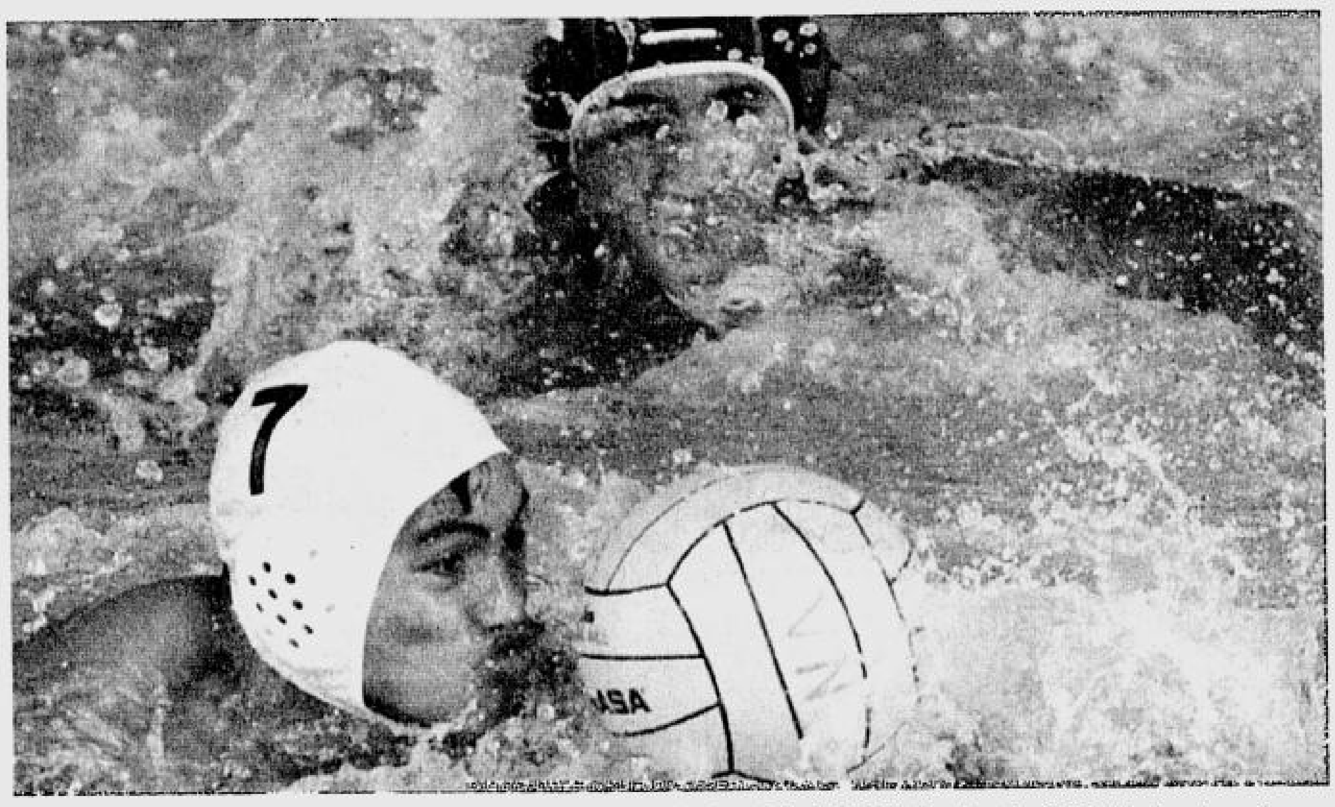

MICHAEL Jorolan of the Philippines (in white head cap) beats Methap Srisabai of Thailand to the ball in the two teams' water polo battle for bronze medal. The Filipinos bowed to the Thais. EDWIN BACASMAS

RP karatekas eye 3 golds; netters gain

By Ernesto Gonzales and Roy Luarca

22nd SEA GAMES
VIET NAM
2003

HANOI/Ho Chi Minh City--Rated highly by its Italian training consultant, the RP karatedo team gets going today vowing to grab at least three golds in the 22nd Southeast Asian Games here.

Led by defending champions Gretchen Malalad and Jose Mari Pabillore, the punch-kick artists go for the female and male kumite (sparring) team golds at the Chia Lam gymnasium.

The Filipinos also see action in the male and female kata (form) team finals with a squad spearheaded by Cherli Tugday, who won a gold in the individual kata in the last Asian Games in Busan, Korea last year.

Romano Guiseppe, a former World Cup champion, who has been training the nationals since Nov. 27, predicts three golds in the women's division from Malalad in the +60kg class, Adora Aquino in the -48kg bracket and Marna Pabillore in the -53kg category.

Everybody is capable of a gold in the men's division Guiseppe said after putting the Filipinos through 1 and ½-hours of rigid workout yesterday.

Looking fit and agile as his athletes, the 36-year-old Guiseppe has been serving on-and-off as RP training consultant since 2001.

Guiseppe, who has conducted two previous training sessions with the nationals this year, said the Filipinos have developed into gold-medal potentials with new technical expertise in footwork and leg action.

"Now they are no longer bulls," he said, referring to the old RP offensive tactic of just rushing forward towards the enemy.

The pretty Malalad, who started training only after joining the Bb. Pilipinas beauty contest last June, has also won a bronze in the +60kg class in the Asian Games.

In tennis, the Philippine women's team advanced but the men's squad got ousted in the quarterfinals.

Powered by Anna Patricia Santos and Czarina Mae Arevalo, the Filipinas notched a 3-0 victory over Myanmar as they forged a semifinal battle with the Indons today.

Santos, the country's top ranked female netter, whipped Kyi Mya Zaw, 6-1, 6-1, while Arevalo dumped Amy Tun, 6-1, 6-0.

Santos then combined with Anna Patricia Labay to beat the tandem of Amy Tun and Chit Su Yee, 5-3, 3-6, 7-6, in the no-bearing doubles.

Cager Gonzales taken to hospital

By Roy Luarca

HO CHI MINH CITY—National cager Wesley Gonzales was taken to the hospital here last night after a prolonged bout with allergy.

Fortunately, the routine check-up yielded normal results and Gonzales wasn't confined. He was later allowed to go back to the hotel of RP-Cebuana Lhuillier.

GONZALES

The 6-foot-4 Gonzales, who shone for the Ateneo Blue Eagles in the last UAAP, was under observation in the medical clinic of the Philippine delegation for the past three days.

Tats Suzara, deputy administrative officer of Team Philipines in this city, said the 21-year-old Gonzales is up and well. "Everything is okay. He just needs some rest."

Gonzales' allergy was traced to a medicine he took in Manila before the bulk of the Philippine delegation left Manila on Tuesday.

Aric del Rosario, head coach of RP-Cebuana Lhuillier, said Gonzales is certain to miss the Filipinos first game against the Thais on Sunday.

Del Rosario, however, said that the Filipinos have enough firepower to pull them through against the Thais.

Bodybuilders flex muscles, 5 gain finals

HO CHI MINH City—Filipino bodybuilders flexed their muscles yesterday as all five bets hurdled the pre-judging and barged into the finals of the 22nd Southeast Asian Games at the Ben Thanh Competition Hall.

Light middleweight Alfredo Trazona, the 2001 Southeast Asia Bodybuilding Championships titlist, led the Filipinos' march as he moved closer toward fulfilling his promise of bagging a gold medal here.

Aside from Trazona, also advancing into today's finals are bantam Roman Cortuna Jr., lightweight Jose Bautista, welter Armando Villasoto and lightheavy Angelito Llora.

"*Maganda* (Good). I think we have good chances," said team manager Corina Mojica.

Apart from the 39-year-old Trazona, seventh placer in the Busan Asian Games, Llora and Bautista, a marine engineer, were rated as bright medal prospects.

"Each one of them is capable of winning," said Mojica. "They've prepared long and hard for this games."

The bodybuilders are returning to the SEAG after missing the last two editions and have yet to win a medal since the 1995 Chiang Mai SEAG. *Roy Luarca*

Judokas gun for gold again

HO CHI MINH City—What they failed to get two years ago, Aristotle Lucero and Nancy Quillotes will try to obtain in the judo competitions.

Lucero, a half lightweight, and Quillotes, an extra lightweight, were both silver medalists in the Kuala Lumpur SEAG.

The 27-year-old Lucero, a criminology graduate from Zamboanga City, will battle Lao's Athit Lakpakdy while Quillotes, a discovery from Dulag, Leyte, will tackle the winner between Myanmar's Thandar Win and Vietnam's Van Ngoc Ty. *Roy Luarca*

Her good looks will knock you out

By Ernesto Gonzales

HANOI—If she does not knock you out with her good looks, then you're sure to get floored by her kicks and blows.

Known as Bb. Pilipinas Candidate No. 22 several months back, Gretchen Malalad is now in the limelight as a strong bet for a Southeast Asian Games gold medal in karatedo which begins here today.

The 23-year-old, 5-foot-7 Malalad is one of two defending champions in the 23-strong karatedo squad, and RP training consultant Romano Guiseppe of Italy, a former World Cup champion, thinks she'll deliver one of three golds expected from the women's division.

She topped the 60-kg kumite in Malaysia two years ago and proved she was no flash in the pan by seizing a bronze medal in the Asian Games in Busan, Korea last year despite a dislocated shoulder.

Gretchen, a typical Filipina beauty, was down to 55kg and flaunted statistics of 35-24-35 when she decided to try her luck in another "competition" upon the prodding of Philippine Sports Commission official Tats Suzara.

MALALAD JESS YUSON

An AB communication arts graduate from UST, Malalad had plenty of time in her hands then, having undergone surgery to repair her injured shoulder.

Barely a week after her cast was removed, she reported for the contestants' interview, passed it and then went through the usual routine of learning how to carry herself during the endless practice and photo sessions.

In the crunch, so to speak, Malalad turned to her sport.

During the search for the Miss Talent award, Malalad became the runaway choice as she impressed the judges with the way she clobbered four rivals in a mock fight scene.

"Thirteen *yata*," she smiled when asked how she eventually fared in the final judging.

But for this only girl in a karatedo-loving family of three living in Cainta, Rizal, that figure is 12 notches off her real worth as a Filipina champ.

22nd Southeast Asian Games brought to you by
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UST faculty cheer on Pinoys

HO CHI MINH City—More than 30 faculty members of the University of Santo Tomas Institute of Physical Education and Athletics arrived here Thursday to cheer on Team Philippines in the 22nd Southeast Asian Games. The group is headed by Fr. Ermito de Sagun. A lady faculty member said they will also observe how the Games are being conducted and visit some colleges and universities. They will proceed to Bangkok after four days to continue their observation tour before returning to Manila. *Roy Luarca*

***

HO CHI MINH City—The Vietnamese are rabid football fanatics. This city virtually stood still during the game between Vietnam and Indonesia Thursday night.

Even street hawkers and sales persons are glued on television sets during the match, which finally ended at 1-0 in Vietnam's favor. Minutes later, people began coming out into the streets and soon these are jammed with teenagers riding their motorcyles, wearing victory headbands and blowing trumpets. The celebration lasted well after midnight. *Roy Luarca*

***

HO CHI MINH City—First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain will be arriving in this bustling port city of motorcycles today. Mr. Arroyo and Buhain will provide moral support to Filipino athletes competing in nine Southeast Asian Games events slated at different venues here. They are also expected to hold a press conference and meet with members of the Filipino community here. *Roy Luarca*

EMILLE Christa Santos of the Philippines performs on the balance beam during the women's gymnastic team competition in the Vietnam SEA Games on Friday. AP

Vietnam comes to a standstill, then erupts into a frenzy

By Ernesto Gonzales

HANOI—For Vietnam, it seems nothing beats winning the football championship.

While they are expected to figure prominently in the overall championship race as the host nation traditionally does in the Southeast Asian Games, the Vietnamese showed Thursday night that a gold in football is what they really covet after all.

Ranged against powerhouse Indonesia, Vietnam eked out a 1-0 win that virtually sealed its entry into the semifinals after earlier battling Thailand to a 1-1 draw.

The victory was greeted by a thunderous roar from local newsmen at the Main Press Center and soon after a wild, noisy celebration throughout the city erupted.

Screaming fans riding in tandems on motorcycles with horns blaring waved national banners as their two-wheeled machines thundered through the major thoroughfares in a victory statement lasting until the wee hours of yesterday.

"Vietnam sleepless night," declared a headline on an article of the win that appeared on the 22nd SEA Games Express, the daily news bulletin of the event yesterday.

Football is considered a prime sport here that when Vietnam placed a record fourth overall over the Philippines in Malaysia two years ago, it rated the victory in women's football as "the most valuable result" among the 33 golds the country achieved.

Vietnam showed its credential as a football power in Southeast Asia by placing second in Brunei in 1999.

And with terrific hometown support behind them, the Vietnamese may just go all the way this time.

RP chessers blitz rivals

Mendoza assured of bronze

By Roy Luarca

HO CHI MINH City—Olympian Beverly Mendoza beat compatriot and fellow Woman International Master Christine Rose Mariano, 2-0, yesterday to assure herself of at least a bronze medal in individual rapid chess competition of the 22nd Southeast Asian Games at the Van Don Indoor Stadium here.

It was the same story in men's play as Grandmaster Joey Antonio and GM-candidate Mark Paragua are also slated to face each other late last night for a semifinal slot.

The fourth-ranked Antonio and the fifth-seeded Paragua hurdled their respective Malaysian rivals by similar 2-0 scores.

Filling in for WGM-candidate Arianne "Bo" Caoili, Mendoza showed her mettle by toppling Mariano with white in Game 1 of a Center-Counter and in Game 2 of a French with black.

The 21-year-old three-time national champion, who is seeded fourth here, will meet local bet and top seed Le KT Kim in today's semifinals.

It was a heartbreaking loss for Mariano, a five-time national champion, as she had beaten Malaysia's Nur Sh Zulkafli via sudden-death earlier in the first round.

They fought to a 1-1 draw in the first round, ended the blitz round in another 1-1 tie before Mariano eventually won, 6-5, in the decider.

"*Sayang*. We would have preferred that our players meet later," said lawyer Sammy Estimo, secretary general of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

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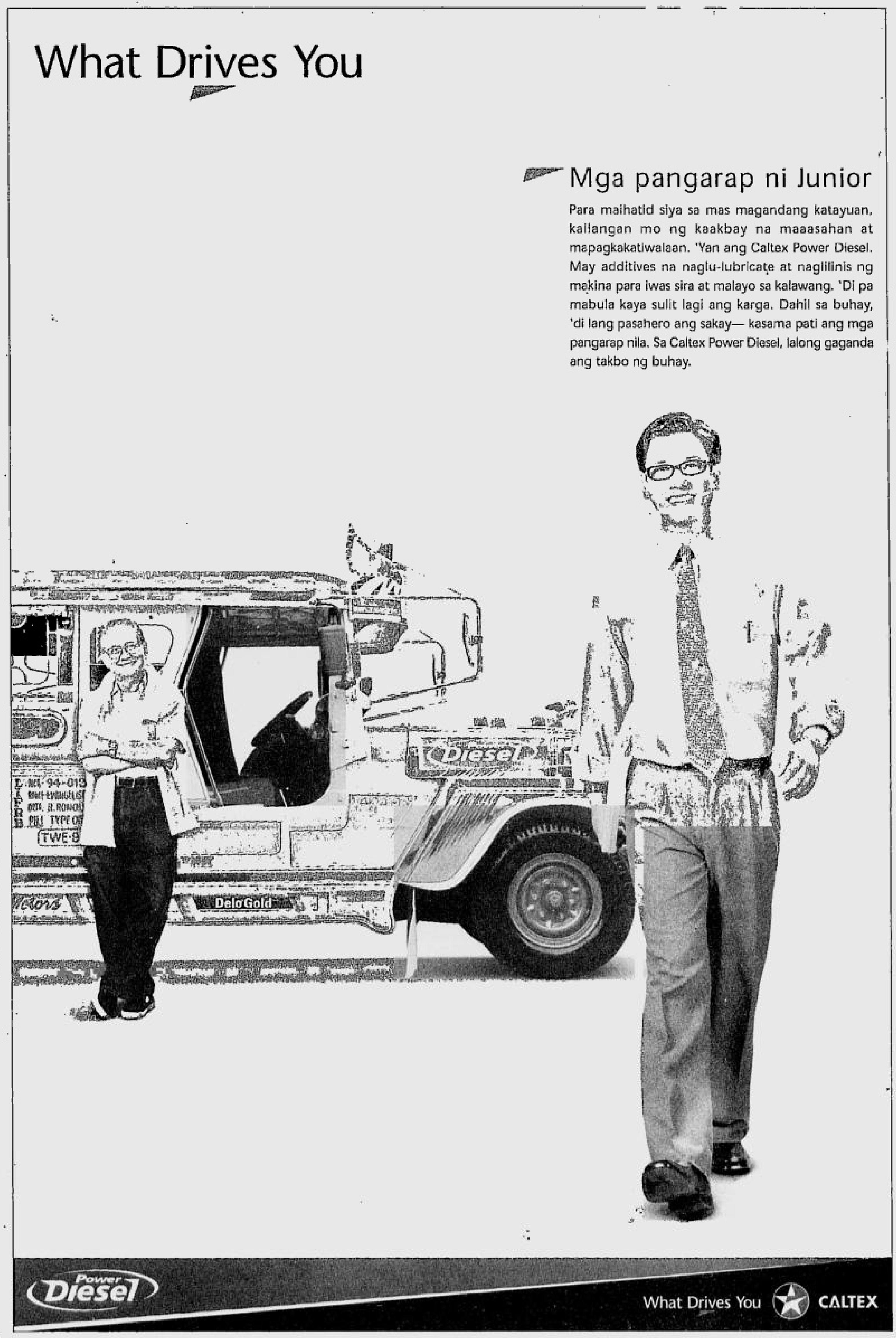

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Mizuno-DHL virtual Fil-Am golf champ

By Al S. Mendoza

BAGUIO CITY—A reversal of roles is in the works, with Mizuno-DHL emerging yesterday as the virtual winner of the premiere crown in the 54th Fil-Am Golf Invitational here.

Mizuno-DHL appeared ready to wrap up its first Fil Division championship today after finishing second twice behind four-time defending champion CAP-Southwoods in 2001 and 2002.

But Mizuno-DHL looked set to lose its Am Division championship to CAP-Southwoods, its victim the last two years, in the tournament presented by Smart Communications and sponsored by Northwest Airlines and Royal Caribbean International.

Romeo Jaraula fired a 2-under-par equivalent of 38 points at Camp John Hay yesterday to fortify Mizuno-DHL's serious bid for the overall crown after struggling for two days with mediocre scores at Baguio Country Club.

Jaraula got support from Paul Miñoza who had 36, Erwin Vinluan 34 and Dr. Tristan Tabanas 33 for Mizuno-DHL's three-day total of 396.

That 141 yesterday by Mizuno-DHL was 5 points up on CAP-Southwoods, which assembled 136 on the 40 points of Jerome Delariarte, 35 of Ton Ton Asistio, 31 by Mark Lopez and 30 of either Artemio Murakami or Gene Bondoc for 380.

"We will coast along in the Fil Division and will be hopeful we could still make a sweep of both division championships," said Lovell Gopez, the 26-year-old Mizuno Phils. president who is captain of Mizuno-DHL.

But it will take a miracle of gargantuan proportions for Mizuno-DHL to save its Am Division championship as it trailed CAP-Southwoods by a huge 21 points, 390-369, in the series that gives 1 point to a bogey, 2 to a birdie and 3 to a hole-in-one in the five-to-play, four-to-count format.

CAP-Southwoods scored 132 at the completion of its delayed second round at Camp John Hay and then made 124 at Baguio Country Club to transform a 2-point deficit into a formidable 21-point margin over Mizuno-DHL going to today's final round.

"It was a moving day for all of us in the Am Division," said Jeric Hechanova of CAP-Southwoods.

Eighteen-year-old Michael Bibat led CAP-Southwoods with 33 points, and Jun Jun Plana added 32, Hanson So Jr. 31 and Juami Rocha 28.

Mizuno-DHL found soil after soaring high at Camp John Hay with 138 and 130, crashing to 101 at Baguio Country Club to virtually lose grip of its Am Division championship.

Lawrence Negrido, going 5-under the first two days at Camp John Hay, went 8-over with 28 points at BCC to share top scoring honors with Jimmy Feliciano for Mizuno-DHL. Rudy Amata contributed 24 and Greg Laguatan 21, with Kit Lopez making a no-count 20.

"Perhaps, we didn't pray as hard as we did in the first two rounds," said Gopez of his team in the Am Division.

Royal Canberra was third in the Am Division championship and Forest Hills fourth, followed by Baguio Exiles.

The other backers this year are Eva Air, Pagcor, Wilson Sports, San Miguel Corp., Caltex, Hapee Toothpaste, Baguio Jungolf, F.B. Calma, Gerry's Grill and U-Bix Corp.

SMB downs Coke, takes 2-1 edge

By June Navarro

DONDON Hontiveros rose to the occasion as San Miguel Beer escaped with an 86-81 decision over Coca-Cola to take a 2-1 lead in their best-of-seven series last night in the PBA Reinforced Conference Finals at the Araneta Coliseum.

Hontiveros stepped up in the absence of San Miguel Beer import Kwan Johnson and Danny Ildefonso, who was suspended for punching Tee McClary of Coca-Cola in Game 2.

The Cebuano hotshot pumped in 13 of his team-high 22 points in the fourth quarter as the Beermen went through several deadlocks before putting the sting out of the importless Tigers.

Jeffrey Cariaso and Rudy Hatfield took up the scoring cudgels for the Tigers, who struggled and played without McClary, who also sat out Game 3 after that skirmish with Ildefonso.

"With or without an import, I know Coca-Cola will play their hearts out. We're just lucky that our local stepped up tonight," said San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico.

Cedric Ceballos, a last-minute replacement for the injured Johnson, failed to create a ripple but contributed heavily on defense and rebounding, making Uichico doubly proud as well.

"Cedric provided us a lift. It's better to have an import than play importless at all," said Uichico.

Visibly exhausted due to a long-haul flight from the United States, Ceballos, the NBA's 1992 slam-dunk king, tossed in 11 points and hauled down 10 rebounds in 38 minutes of action.

Ceballos, who has a Filipina for a wife, arrived at dawn yesterday to replace Johnson on a temporary basis. Uichico declined to comment if they will keep Ceballos for the remainder of the series.

Meanwhile, the Red Bull Barako management formally appealed the long-term suspension slapped on Jimwell Torion yesterday, calling it grossly unfair in comparison to the sanction received by Ildefonso.

Scores:

SAN MIGUEL 86—Hontiveros 22, Peña 19, Belasco 14, Ceballos 11, Racela 9, Gahol 7, Mente 2, Victoria 2.

COCA-COLA 81—Cariaso 26, Hatfield 18, Morano 11, Wainwright 7, Reavis 6, Juinio 5, Hugnatan 4, Avenido 2, Abarrientos 2, Hawkins 0, Antonio 0.

Quarters: 26-23, 45-34, 62-58, 86-81.

AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

REYNEL Hugnatan of Coke loses the ball as two Beermen defend.

Hail Hall

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I RAISE a glass to Rodney Hall. Yesterday, Rodney disqualified himself in the third round of the 54th Fil-Am Golf Invitational in Bagnio City.

For sure, he'd be disqualified even if he didn't do what he did. Rodney, a mainstay of Baguio Exiles, signed for a wrong scorecard, a golf infraction that automatically disqualifies a player.

Ria Anne Bisuna of the Information Professionals Inc., the IT-literate company that has been handling the scoring chores for the Fil-Am golf the last three years or so, called the attention of rules men about the discrepancy.

How did Ria, who heads the extremely efficient IPI staff, come to know of Rodney Hall's case?

"Mr. Hall came to me while we were encoding his scores and said, 'Hey, there was a mistake in my score at No. 8. I made 5 there but in the giant scoreboard outside, what appears is a 4.' So, I showed him his scorecard and when he saw the 4 instead of 5 that he was saying, he readily said, 'I am disqualified,'" said Ria.

What a guy, this Rodney Hall.

If all golfers were like him, the job of rules men would be as easy as collecting toll receipts at the Northern Luzon Expressway.

Golf is a very exact game when it comes to rules. What will look like a non-issue in a round of golf will sometimes amount to a really big issue that, in extreme cases, can result in a player getting disqualified outright.

Rodney Hall's case illustrates it all.

Had he not submitted his scorecard yet, his score would have been rectified, saving him from disqualification. The mere act of submitting your scorecard with your signature on it, you abandon all rights to your round for the day. Just a single entry that is faulty in any of the 18 holes played would most likely result in your disqualification.

The one chance for Rodney Hall not getting disqualified was if his score on No. 8 at Baguio Country Club that he had signed showed a score worse than what he actually scored. Meaning, had the score he signed at No. 8 was for a 5 when he actually scored a 4, that 5 would have remained and he would not get disqualified.

Golf's exactness is such that it has actually more laws than the laws of court. That is why at times, we could not blame golfers from griping endlessly when they get hit with an adverse ruling. The unfortunate thing in golf is, the words "honest mistake" don't exist in this game. You make a mistake and, in the process, you break a rule, you suffer a penalty. Unlike in a court of law, the court of golf has no court of appeals.

Rodney Hall knows that damn well and may his tribe increase.

***

FASTBREAK. Jun Velasco, my poet-*kumpadre* who writes a column for Sunday Punch, is enjoining all alumni of Dagupan City National High School to join the Grand Reunion on Dec. 28 in that bustling city in Pangasinan. Jun said all graduates from 1943 to 2003 will be treated to fun and dance, with no less than my friend, Ramon Jacinto of the RJ & The Riots fame, providing music. I wish I could join the party and perhaps belt some Beatle songs in a duet with RJ. That'd be fun.

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CMC Di Ravena Mariners	5	2
TNT	2	4
SAMSUNG	0	6

Junior Boys	W	L
Shell Velocity	5	2
Red Sox	3	2
FPH Giants	2	2
Alaska	1	3
Cubs	1	4

Major Boys	W	L
Philtown Mets	6	0
Enchanted Kingdom Wizards	3	1
Diamondbacks	3	2
Outlaws	2	3
Colgate	2	4
TGI Fridays	1	2
Giants	0	5

Minor Boys	W	L
Coca-Cola	4	0
Pancake House	2	1
Miscel Beach Lemonade	2	1
Terabyte Tigers	3	2
Island Graphics	1	2
Pizza Hut	1	3
Citibank	0	4

Coach Pitch: Round 2 - Bearing Games

	W	L
Amwire	1	0
Café Lupe	1	0
Carepak	1	0
National Sports Grill	0	1
Shakey's	0	1
Spin Giants	0	1

T Ball: No Scoring

	Games
Panasonic	4
Unilab-Evervon	3
Nestlé-Kimy	4
CPKids	3

ILLAM SOFTBALL

Senior/Big Girls	W	L
Tadeco Senoritas	3	2
Dunkin Donut	3	2
ABS-CBN	1	3

Junior Girls	W	L
Globe	6	0
Nike Women	3	2
Citibank	1	3
Guest Team-Camp Crame	0	5

Major Girls	W	L
Orange Juice Crushers	7	0
Olympia	3	3
IBM	3	4
Level-Up Poring Dolls	0	6

Gabica faces Pampanga cue bets

THE "SEARCH for Tanduay the No. 1 Billiards Player" resumes with featured cue artist Antonio "Gaga" Gabica, back-to-back champion of the 9-Ball Tokyo Open, facing off with two challengers from Pampanga at the Robinson's Malls.

Roland Garcia and Marvin Liang, earning their spurs from tough town matches in Pampanga, will put Gabica into an acid test in separate Race-to-5 matches.

Sponsored by Tanduay the No. 1 Rhum, Robinson's Malls and Rommel's Billiards, the matches will be aired over the National Broadcasting Network tonight on prime time, 8-9 p.m.

Garcia is a 22-year-old native of Guagua, Pampanga, who topped the Guagua 9-Ball 2002 Championships while San Fernando native Liang, 23, recently copped the 2003 San Fernando 9-Ball Billiards crown.

The format of the matches gives Gabica a twice-to-beat advantage. The winner of the series will then be challenged by two new budding talents the following week.

The overall champion this year gets sponsorship from Tanduay as its homegrown star and will carry the colors of Tanduay and the Philippines in prestigious international competitions in the near future.

The said event which was conceptualized by Tanduay advertising manager Larry Li and supported by Tanduay marketing manager Andres Co is aimed at boosting the image of billiards as a major sports spectacle in the country through television.

It is designed to help talents reach their dreams of becoming the country's next international billiards superstar. The country's foremost player, Bata Reyes, hails from Angeles City.

Interested parties may inquire with the Corporate Billiards League secretariat at 0918-9219934 or may log on at the www.corporatebilliardsleague@-yahoo.com.

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SPORTS TV

Compiled by
Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA Action; 8:30 a.m.; ESPN—Get your fill of NBA highlights and news in this weekly show.

NBA-Spurs vs Magic; 9 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); ESPN; Pacers vs Sonics; 11:30 a.m.; Solar Sports—Defending champion San Antonio takes on slumping Orlando while red-hot Indiana clashes with Seattle.

NBA Greatest Game-Jazz vs. Sonics, Game 7, 1996 Western Conference Finals; 8 a.m.; Solar Sports—Seattle fends off Utah to earn a trip to the NBA Finals.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Jones beats local drivers

GUEST driver Christian Jones, son of a former world champion, was not in the mood to fail his revered surname as he turned back the challenge of the local favorites in sweeping the championship round of the Asian Formula 3 Series at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

Jones drove his Neil Brown-prepared Mugen F301 to near perfection to rule both international races of the series dubbed as "2003 Addict Mobile Formula 3 Super Prix."

Jones' father, Alan, was the 1980 F1 champ.

The Aussie submitted the day's fastest laptime of 1:26.564 in Race 9 where he clocked 21:30.675 to prevail over Mark Goddard of Castrol-Ambipur-Team Goddard and top local driver Pepon Marave of Shell-Casino Filipino-Team Tom's.

It was Marave who gave Jones a tough challenge as he stuck close to the Australian in the first 10 laps of the race sponsored by Addict Mobile, Hewlett Packard, Fila, Samsung and Lima City Hotel together with series sponsors Yokohama, Denso and RCL.

Adidas 10K unfolds Sunday

THE 5TH Adidas King of the Road reels off Sunday at the Global City in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig.

A record field of over 1,500 runners, the biggest ever in a 10K race, is expected to answer the starting gun at 6 a.m.

Veteran internationalist Reynaldo delos Reyes, Cresenciano Sabal, and Alley Quisay of Baguio City are entered in the men's division, with defending champion Liza Delfin, Liza Yambao, Marychiel Minas and 14-year-old Sealand Agana heading the field in the distaff side.

John P. Alonte, Adidas Phils. president and managing director; Angelica P. Suiza, marketing director, and Godofredo "Goody" Custodio, sports marketing manager, will be on hand to welcome the runners and award the prizes to the top finishers.

SPORTSWATCH

UCM, Konka cagers top Grace elims

UCM Cooling Coils '97 and Konka Plastics '95 posted contrasting victories to complete a sweep of their respective groups in the eliminations of the 2003 Grace Christian High School Inter-Batch basketball tournament at the GCHS gym. With Kelwin Ang and Rocky Tan taking turns in burning the hoops early, UCM raced to a 44-27 lead at the turn before coasting to an 83-70 win over Fulcon '93. Konka had a surprisingly tough time dispatching Red Bull '87, 78-73. Both teams finished the elimination with 5-0 marks to earn top seeding in the quarterfinals starting Saturday. YKL Film 2000 also loomed as a strong contender after a 115-19 demolition of Uratex '90. YKL improved to a 4-1 card in Group A. Congo Grille '87 downed Fulcon, 64-59, for a 4-1 slate in Group B. Completing the Group A quarterfinal cast were Anson's '92 and Geronimo 2002 while Karat '99 and Fulcon also advanced in Group B. Anson's mangled Uratex, 90-50, while Karat beat Fuji Film, 79-64.

San Andres prevails in Guam motocross

CALTEX Revtex's Kenneth San Andres, who earned the moniker Wonder Boy due to his outstanding motocross exploits, topped the 85cc junior division of the FIM series' final leg recently in the Guam International Circuit, Guam, USA. The multititled 14-year-old battled stomach cramps in the first heat where he placed third with a mighty first-place finish in the next heat, edging Sean Lipanovich and Shane Morrison for the overall junior title. He beat his closest pursuer by 13 seconds. "We should all be proud of his feat because he proved that he can be Asia's best young rider," said Caltex Revtex manager Ner Marquez Dormiendo, who accompanied the riders to the Guam meet.

Wind Blown Classic highlights Santa Ana card tomorrow

THE PHILIPPINE Racing Club Inc. (PRCI) rolls out the red carpet for champion galloper Wind Blown as it hosts seven major stakes races during the "Wind Blown Racing Festival" tomorrow at the Santa Ana Park.

Highlighted by the P1-million Wind Blown Classic Cup, the blue-ribbon racefest serves as a final tribute to the celebrated six-year-old galloper who has dominated the local horse racing scene for the past three years.

Participating in the 1,800-meter Classic race are four seasoned stakes campaigners led by defending Presidential Gold Cup champion Free Wind.

Out to challenge him for the P600,000 first prize are multiple stakes winners High Octane, Success Story and Material Maker.

Lending support to the day's main event is the running of the P750,000 Philracom Grand Sprint Championship where five of the country's fleetest horses are competing.

Arriba King, the 2002 Sprint champion who is also the recent Marho Breeders' Cup Sprint, sets out to defend his title in the 900-meter contest.

Others seeing action are noted speedballs Bull Rider, Hazmoore and Sacred Hall.

Meanwhile, five other Wind Blown Cup Races will be disputed for tomorrow's special program, including the Wind Blown Juvenile Colts, Wind Blown Juvenile Fillies, Wind Blown 3YO Colts and Fillies, Wind Blown Imported Handicap and the Philracom-Wind Blown Invitational. Winners of each races get P250,000.

Starting time for today's 13-race program is at exactly 1:30 p.m.

Lakers zap Mavs for 8th straight win

DALLAS—Kobe Bryant scored 15 of his 32 points in the third quarter Thursday to help the Los Angeles Lakers cruise past the Dallas Mavericks 114-103 for their eighth straight victory.

"We felt we were in control the whole game," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said. "We had an idea of what we wanted to do and we did it."

Shaquille O'Neal had 25 points and 19 rebounds, and Gary Payton had 17 points and eight assists. Karl Malone, who came an assist shy of a triple-double last time against Dallas, had 11 points, nine rebounds and six assists.

"We match up against this team very well," O'Neal said. "We're always pumped up to play the big teams. We knew this was a huge game."

This was the eighth straight win for Los Angeles, the last four against stiff competition. Before beating the Midwest Division leaders, the Lakers beat Eastern Conference-leading Indiana by 22 and reigning champion San Antonio twice by a total of 20 points.

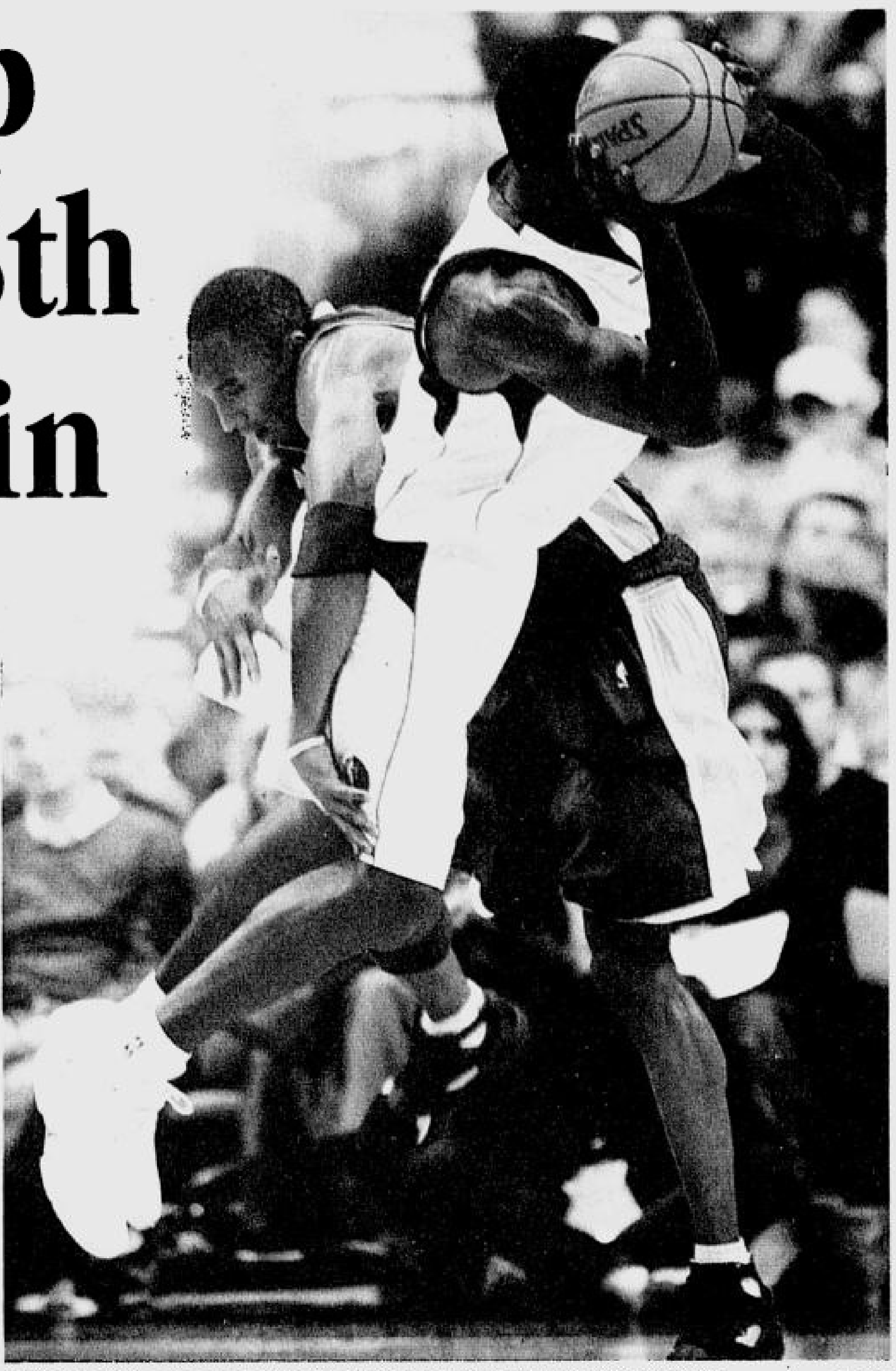
Steve Nash scored 12 of his season-high 30 points during a second-quarter rally that got Dallas within five, but Los Angeles was back in control by halftime.

In Philadelphia, Allen Iverson scored 35 points and sank the winning jumper with 47 seconds remaining to lift Philadelphia over Chicago, 83-82.

Iverson, who scored 85 points his previous two games, took the pass from Eric Snow and dribbled down to the baseline where he made a fadeaway with Kirk Hinrich's hand right in his face.

The Bulls had one last chance with 1.6 seconds left, but Linton Johnson's inbounds pass, intended for Hinrich, knocked off the backboard instead, making Scott Skiles a loser for the first time as Bulls coach. Skiles had won in his Bulls' debut.

Jamal Crawford led the Bulls with 22 points, Eddie Curry had 16 points and 10 rebounds and Hinrich had 14 points. *AP*



BRYANT (left) gets tangled up with Dallas Mavericks forward Michael Finley. REUTERS

Free Wind eyes repeat victory in Gold Cup

FREE Wind guns for a back-to-back win when he leads the field running in the PCSO Presidential Gold Cup, the country's most prestigious horse racing event, on Dec. 14 at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

A record pot of P2.875 million will be staked in the event set to be disputed over 2,000 meters.

The winner of the race gets a record P2 million which was made possible by PCSO's contribution of P1.5 million and an additional P500,000 donated by Don Antonio Floirendo Sr.

Runner-up gets P500,000, while third and fourth placers receive P250,000 and P125,000, respectively.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has been invited to grace the event being held annually to honor the country's chief executive.

Hosting the event for the 19th time since its inaugural staging in 1973 is the Manila Jockey Club Inc. (MJCI) at its new racing facillity in Carmona, Cavite.

MJCI is also sponsoring the first Chairman Jaime Dilag and Commissioners' Cup with a total prize money of P500,000.

Completing the day's triple treat is the P500,000 Philracom Hopeful Stakes race.

Aside from Free Wind, also running in the PGC are Golden Ballet, West Bound, Success Story, Silver Story, Lyonnais, Material Maker, High Octane, Perfect Storm, Diktador, Mica's Magic and Red Star Rising.

Star jockey Jeffril Zarate will ride Free Wind who is expected to meet tough opposition from Material Maker, West Bound, Lyonnais, Golden Ballet and Red Star Rising.

Free Wind won last year's PGC staging, beating a field that included the celebrated Wind Blown.

In his last outing, Free Wind was beaten by Material Maker who topped the Japan Racing Association Cup in wire-to-wire fashion.

Jerome, Juvic head squad

JEROME Delariarte and Juvic Pagunsan will be joined by Marvin Dumandan and Gene Bondocas as they try to end the country's title drought in the Southeast Asia Amateur golf team championship which gets under way Dec. 10 in Brunei.

After winning the event, otherwise known as the Putra Cup, back-to-back in 1995-96, the Filipinos failed to reassert their mastery over their counterparts in the region and have contented themselves with a string of runner-up finishes.

Delariarte and Pagunsan were the spearheads of that team which lost to Thailand. The other members of that 2001 squad were Paul Miñoza and Jay Bayron.

Except for Pagunsan, Delariarte, Dumandan and Bondoc are seeing action in the Fil-Am golf championship being held in Baguio City, hoping the stint will put them in good stead when they slug it out with their regional rivals.

Barring any travel hitches, the team, led by NGAP (National Golf Association of the Phils.) executive officer Jake Ayson and national team coach Roger Retuerto, hopes to leave Monday and get some feel of the par-72 RBA Golf Club course.

Bartolome tops off-road tilt

TEAM Delo's Nole Bartolome Sr. outclassed the field to retain his title after the third staging of the Manila Off-Roaders Club Inc.'s Tough Truck Challenge recently at the Fort Bonifacio Global City.

Three days of thrilling 4x4 adventure, marked by a record number of participants, prizes, activities and corporate sponsors, highlighted the third edition of the prestigious off-road competition, which was presented by Caltex Delo Sports and organized by Mori headed by its president Brian Diaz.

"It's definitely the biggest so far," said Ramon To-ong, Mori treasurer.

Bartolome Sr. relied on a strong finishing kick in Tracks B and C to keep his crown in the main competition. Larry Mendiola of Angeles 4Wheelers was second and Atoy Jamilla of Team X landed third.

Perez leads rallycross entries

ALL eyes will be on current series leader Alex Perez of DMF Team when he defends his title in the ninth leg of the Ultron Rallycross series today.

Perez holds an eight-point lead over Kenneth Dominador in the national championship run-up with 49 points. Ivan Isada of Team Ultron is a far third with 33 points.

Perez also holds the top spot in the overall class followed by Isada and Dominado.

Organizer Activity Asia Association plans to lay out a very technical course on the all-tarmac track located on the parking lot of the Best Buy Duty-Free shop inside Clark Field, Angeles, Pampanga.

Participants from various motorsporting teams such as Team Blaze, Team Ultron, DMF Team and Shago Team will join the event.

Mayol confident vs Ohnaka

By Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

FUKUOKA, Japan—Undefeated Philippine miniflyweight king Rodel "Batang Mandaue" Mayol arrived here yesterday, confident of easily making the weight limit when he steps on the scales today 24 hours before he challenges reigning OPBF champion Genki Ohnaka over 12 rounds.

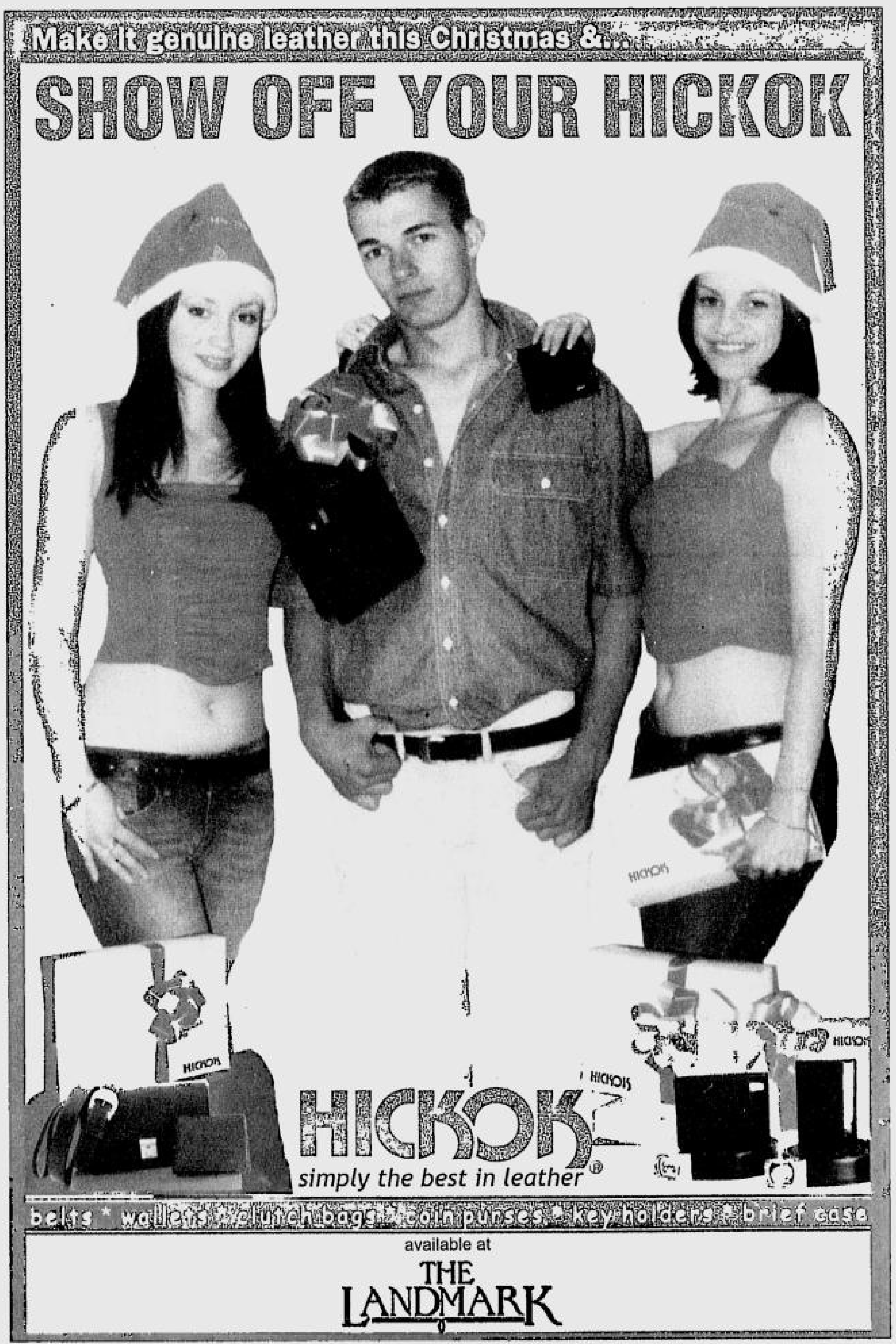
Mayol, accompanied by manager Joy Ouano and trainer Carl Peñalosa Jr., was just a shade over the limit yesterday before boarding a Cathay Pacific flight to Hong Kong en route to this port city.

Before taking a light breakfast, Mayol gamely posed with ex-WBC superfly champ Gerry Peñalosa for a photo-op in Manila. Peñalosa said Mayol will be the next big thing for Philippine boxing.

"I'm confident Mayol can beat the Japanese champ," said Peñalosa, who is himself scheduled for ring action on Jan. 16, 2004.

The Mandaue City-raised Mayol is unbeaten in 14 fights with 11 KOs and is ranked No. 4 in the world, while the 6th-ranked Ohnaka totes a 14-2-1, with six KOs.

"God knows how much I prepared for this fight. I know with His help, I will be victorious," said Mayol.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2 SIGAW SUGBU
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4 STAR RUNNER
5 SCARY MOVIE 3
6 SEX SCANDAL
7 MR. SUAVE
8 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
2 SCARY MOVIE 3
3 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
4 ELF
5 STAR RUNNER
6 MR. SUAVE
7 BABAE SA BREAKWATER
8 OUT OF TIME

SM CITY PAMPANGA
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3 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
4 CHAVIT SINGSON
5 SEX SCANDAL
6 MR. SUAVE

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8294975

1 STAR RUNNER
2 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
3 OUT OF TIME
4 ELF

SM BICUTAN
7763055

1 OUT OF TIME
2 ELF
3 MR. SUAVE
4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2

SM CITY MARILAO

1 MASTER & COMMANDER
2 MR. SUAVE
3 STAR RUNNER
4 SCARY MOVIE 3

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1 MR. SUAVE
2 CHAVIT SINGSON
3 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
4 BABAE SA BREAKWATER
5 OUT OF TIME
6 ELF
7 LOONEY TUNES
8 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
9 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
10 SCARY MOVIE 3

SM SOUTHMALL
8006008

1 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
2 THE GRUDGE
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4 THE GRUDGE
5 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
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9 MR. SUAVE
10 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
11 CHAVIT SINGSON
12 BABAE SA BREAKWATER

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1 STAR RUNNER
2 CHAVIT SINGSON
3 MR. SUAVE
4 BABAE SA BREAKWATER

SM CITY ILOILO
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1 LOONEY TUNES
2 RESERVED
3 CHAVIT SINGSON
4 THE PHONE
5 DARK BLUE
6 UPTOWN GIRLS
7 RESERVED
8 THE SPY

SM CITY MANILA
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1 STAR RUNNER
2 OUT OF TIME
3 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
5 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
6 MASTER & COMMANDER
7 LOONEY TUNES
8 ELF
9 THE GRUDGE
10 SCARY MOVIE 3
11 CHAVIT SINGSON
12 MR. SUAVE

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3 FIGHTING TEMPTATION 11:00, 1:40, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00	6 THE GRUDGE 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00
7 BABAE SA BREAKWATER 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:55	9 SCARY MOVIE 3 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00
8 LOONEY TUNES 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00	10 COLD CREEK MANOR 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

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6 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY - 10:10, 12:10, 2:10, 4:10, 6:10, 8:00, 10:00
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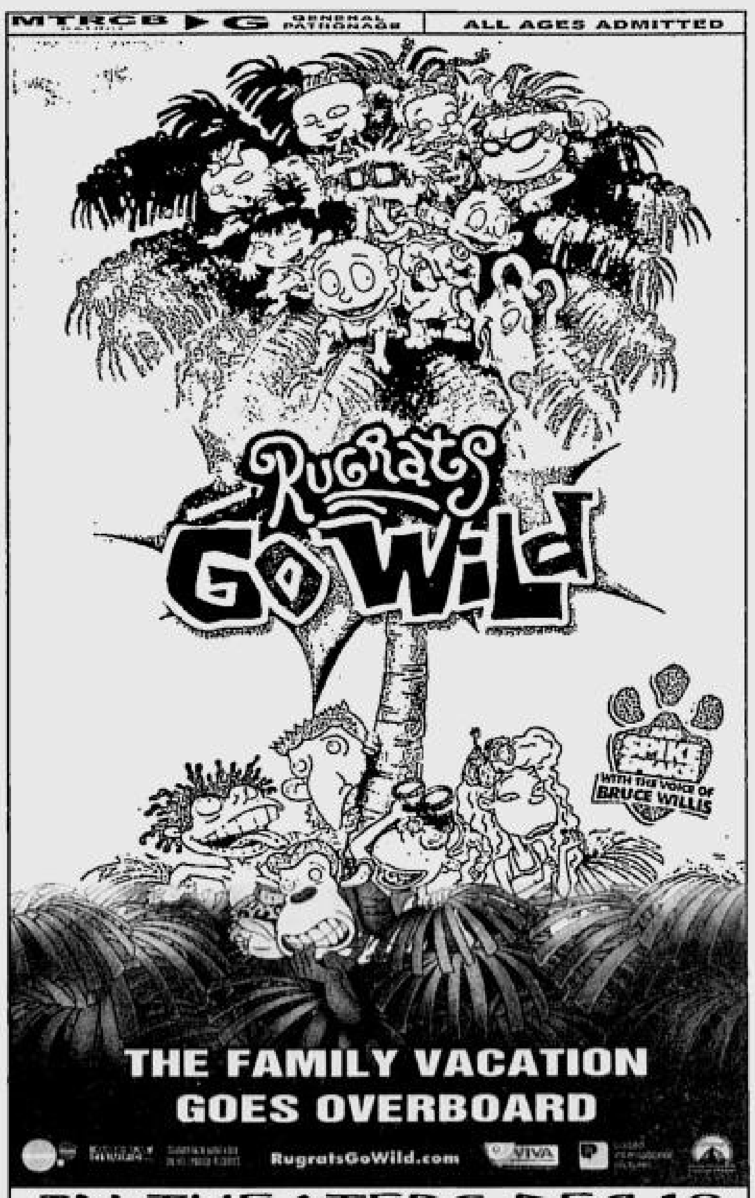
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Roligon 5-cock derby today

A TOTAL of 237 entries are seeing action in the second round eliminations of Roligon Mega Cockpit's "Apordabol Na, Incredibol Pa 5-Cock Derby" starting at 5 p.m. today.

Hosted by Rolly Ligon, the four-day event (Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 11 and 13) stakes a whopping prize of P2.25 million and an imported Nissan Serena.

All qualifiers will advance to the finals on Dec. 13.

Fifteen cockers tallied two points each in the first round eliminations on Nov. 29. They were Alex Tan (Dwight), Henry and Gerry (HJ Group Lucky Molino), DR Jovy (R and R), Rey Briones (Tata Rewy II), Tiling Capitan (H Birthday Lady 121), Marcel Jualo (MTJ Bros), Levi Panlilio (Ralph), Mr. Keiruz (RK), Ronnel Tanada (HTS), Meder Datu (Meroda), Renato Shio (magnificent), Honey Yu (Princess Bernice), Sanel Gudaka (Sanel), Nono San Pablo (Maliitan Lang 1-Cock a Loma) and Gene Avendano (Scarmouche II).

Hackfights are also scheduled starting at 10 a.m. today.

For more details, call 833-2275 and 833-1638.

B'minton clinic set at UST

FORMER badminton world and Asian ladies doubles champion Lai Cai Qin will conduct a clinic on Dec. 12 at the UST Gym to teach young badminton players the finer aspects of the game. This was announced by Thomas Lim, top official of LA Gear, and Fr. Ermito de Sagon of the Institute of Physical Education and athletics of the University of Santo Tomas.

Lai is currently a coach at Tao Nah Primary School and St. Nicholas Girls' School in Singapore.

Assisting her in the clinic are the UST men's and women's badminton teams led by coach Noli Cajefe.

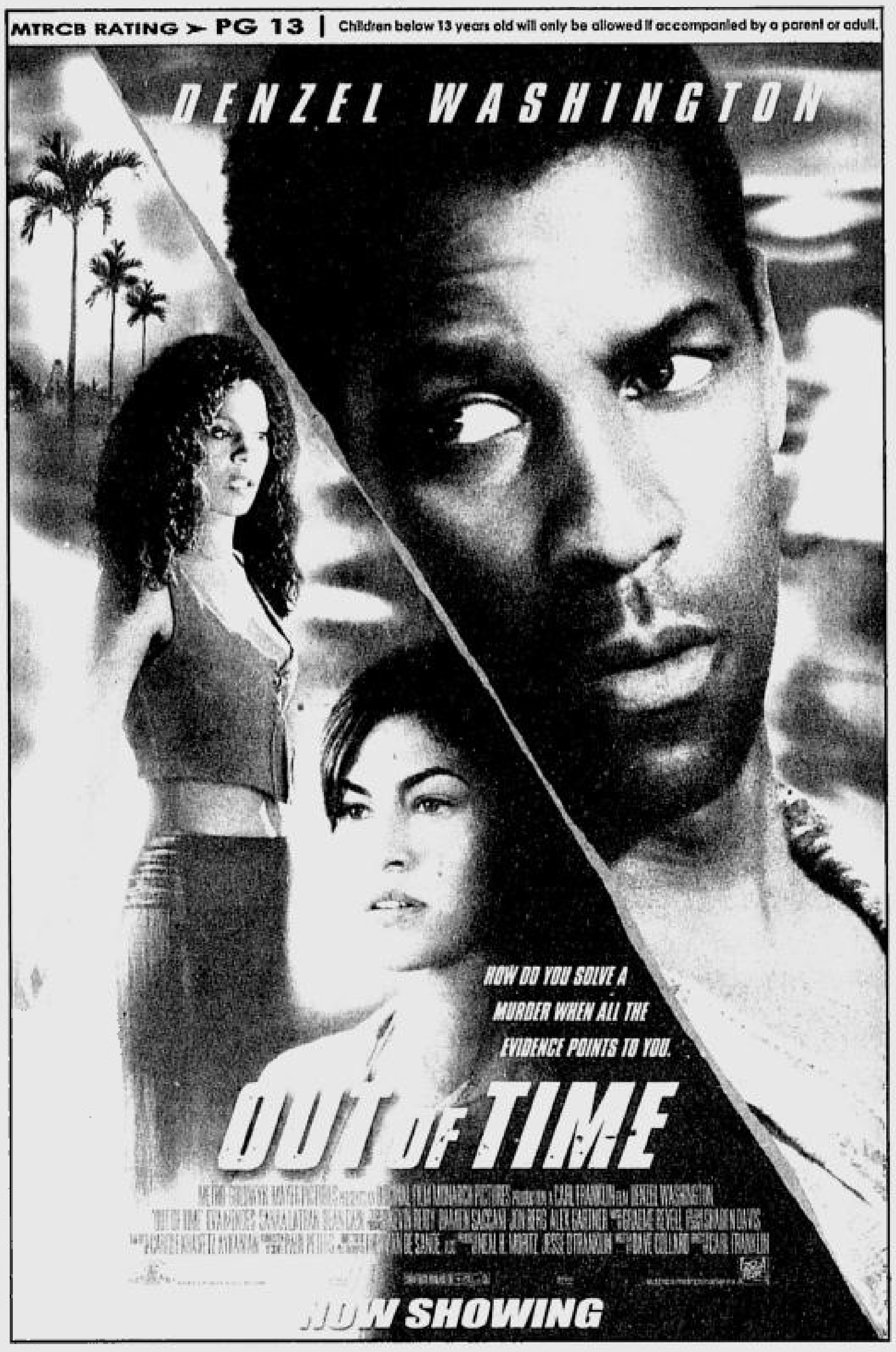
Supporting the LA Gear clinic which is open to public are Burlington Performance Socks, Dunlop Sport, Sportshouse and Sunkist.

For those interested to register, please call TEAM at 894-3576.

WBC fight on RPN-9

VITALI Klitschko aims to get another crack at the title when he battles dangerous Kirk Johnson in a World Boxing Council eliminator dubbed "Heavyweight Explosion" over RPN 9, from 12 noon to 2 p.m., tomorrow. The slugfest is presented by Viva Sports.

In the supporting bout, undefeated Baby Joe Mesi, who has a spectacular record of 25 knockouts in 27 wins, clashes with hard-hitting Monte Barrett, who has a record of 28-2, with 16 knockouts.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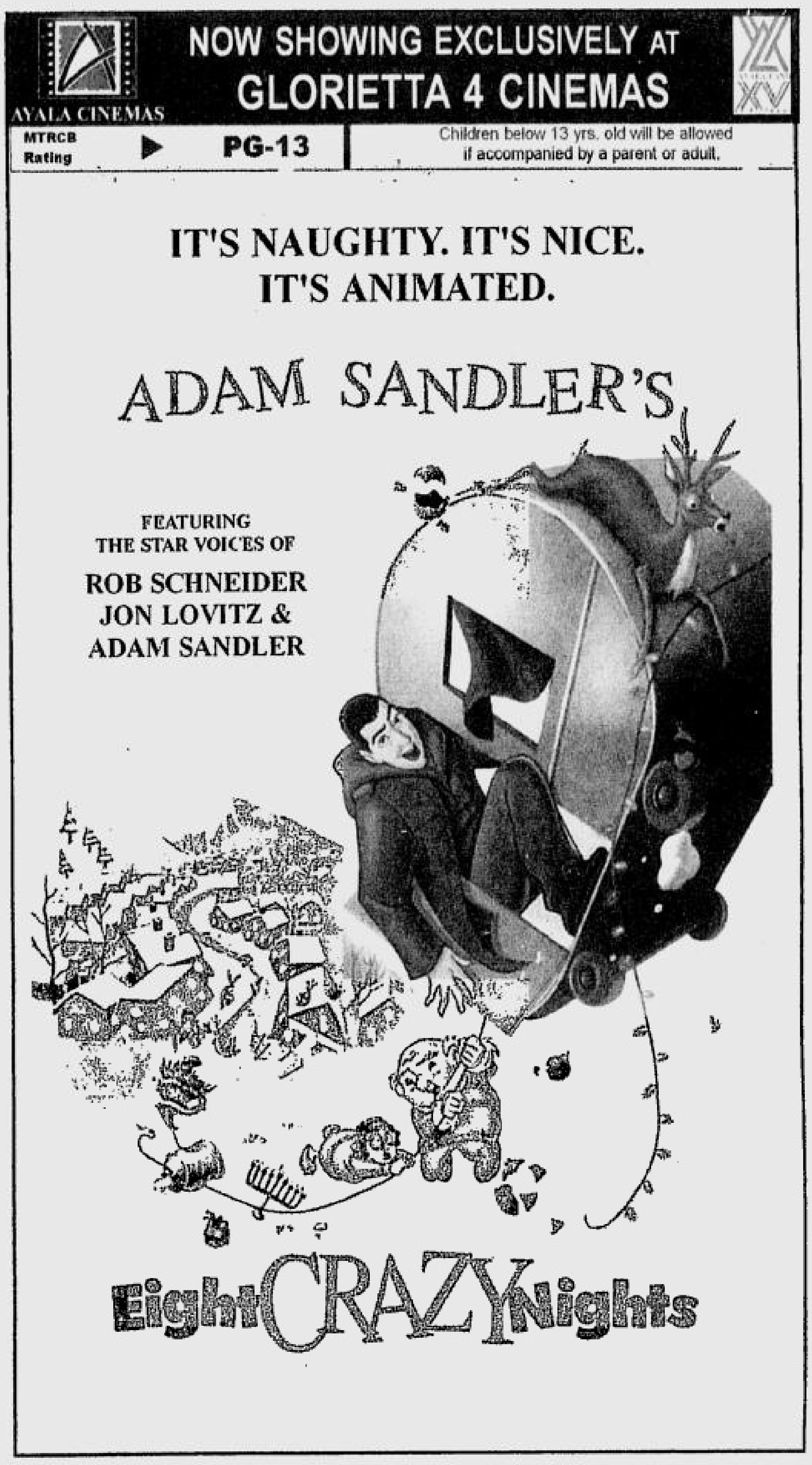
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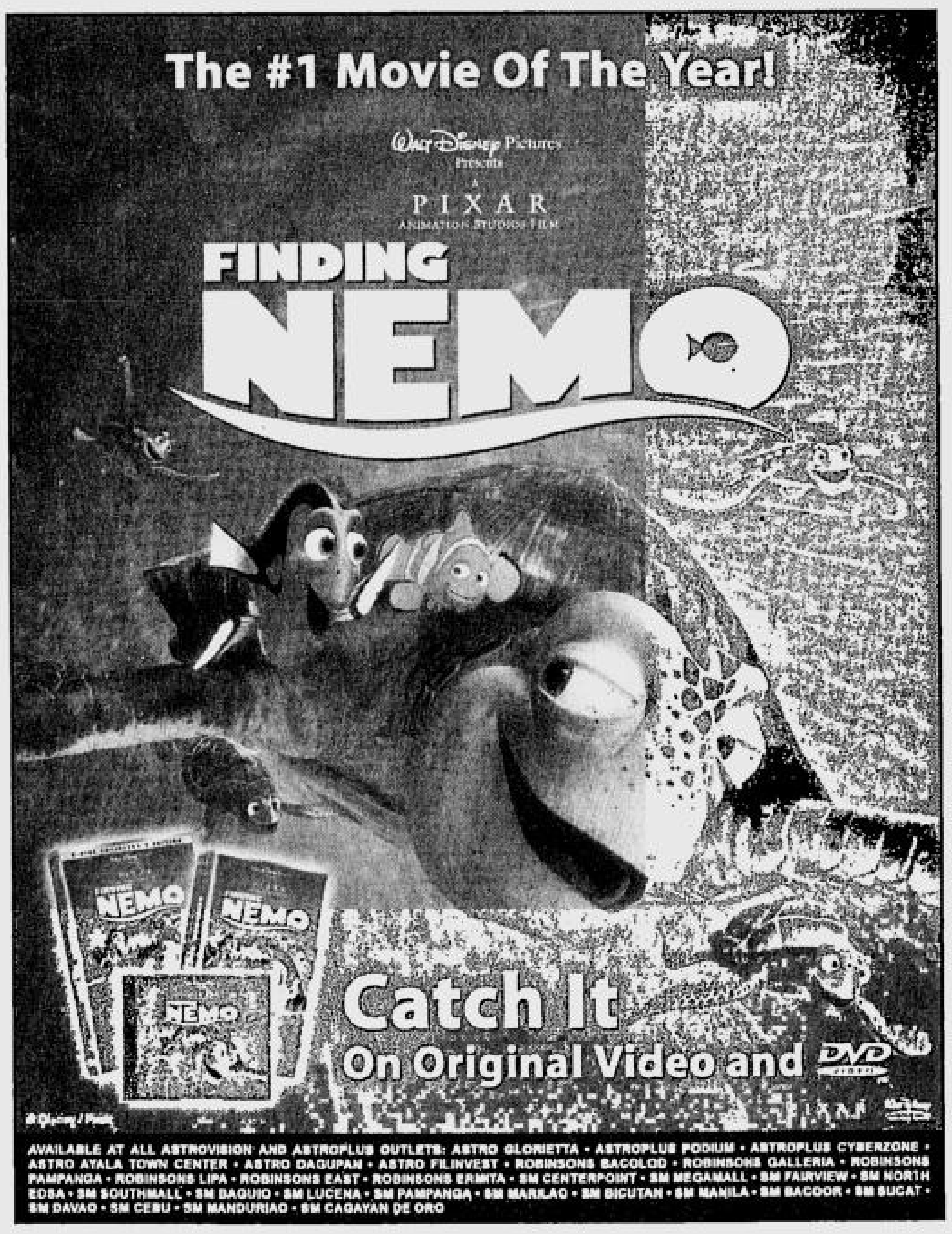
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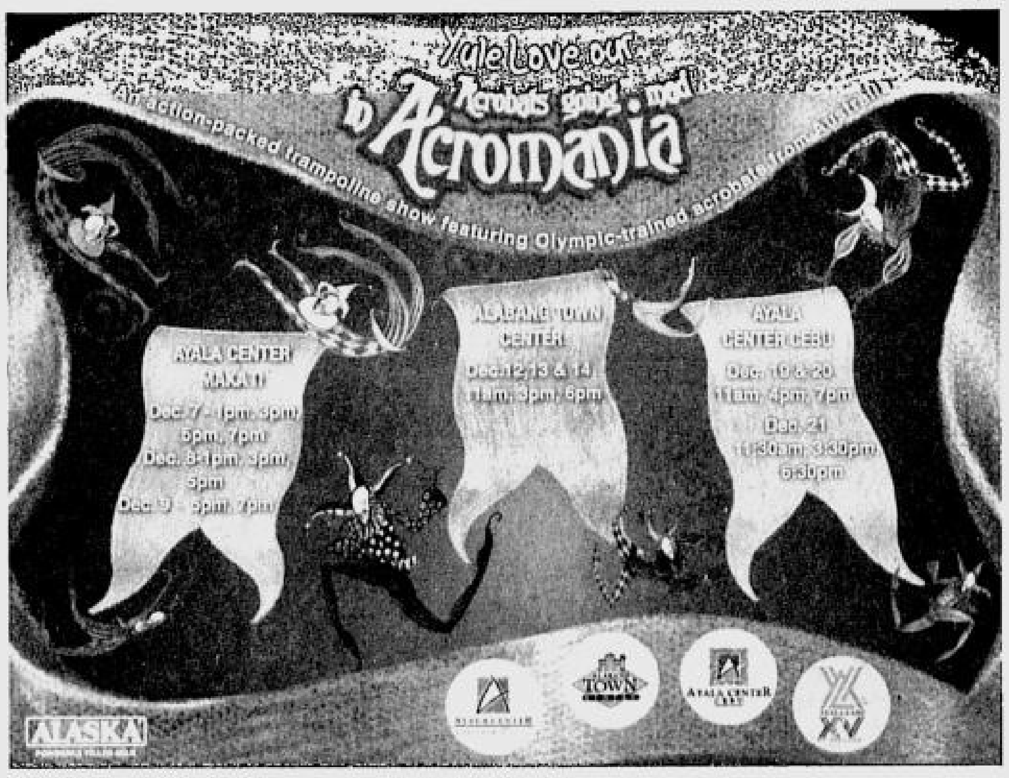
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Dec. 21
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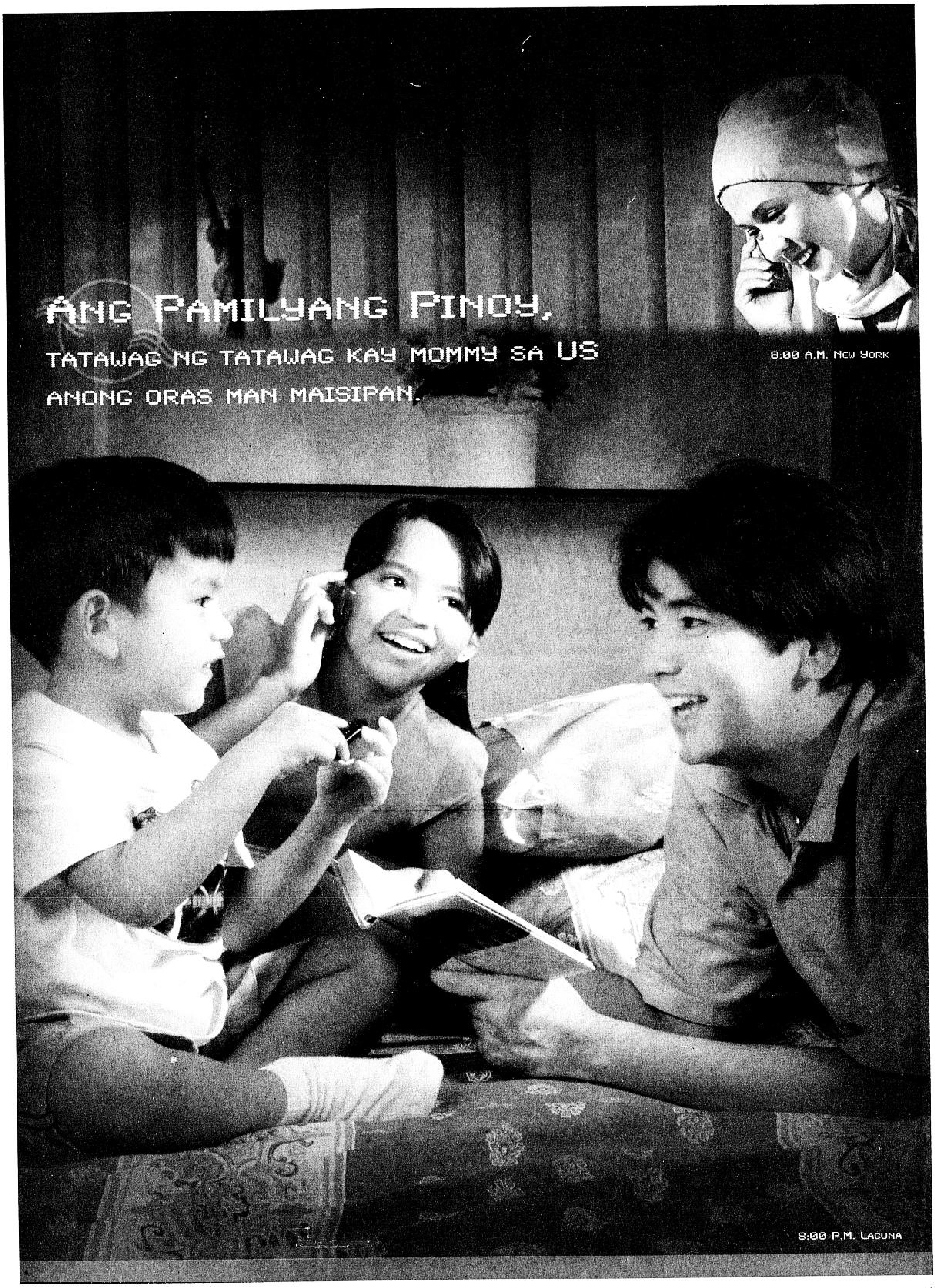
AYALA CENTER CEBU
ALASKA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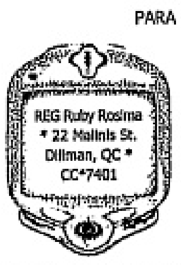
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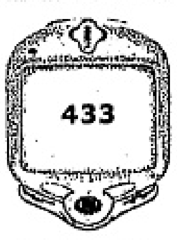

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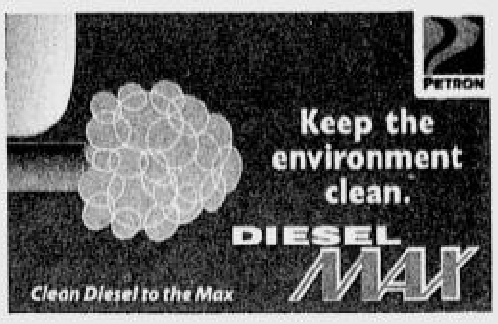
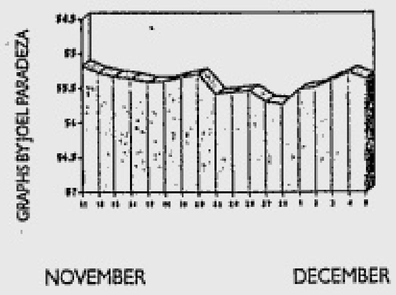


November inflation rises to 3.3%

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 55.36 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 05, 2003

¥ 108.34 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 05, 2003

GOLD: $400.60-401.10
per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 03, 2003

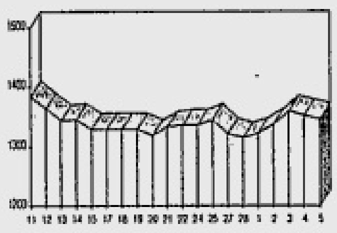
STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower

STOCKS ended slightly lower yesterday due to heightened concerns over peace and order after a spate of brazen kidnappings and bank robberies in the capital, analysts said.

Select blue chips, led by mall developer SM Prime Holdings, slipped as investors locked in gains from a recent rally ahead of the weekend.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

The Philippine main index dropped 6.13 points or 0.45 percent to 1,345.37 points. The market is up 32.1 percent so far this year.

Losers beat gainers 30 to 23 and there were 37 stocks unchanged. Value turnover dipped to P520 million from Thursday's P590.13 million.

"Investors played it safe especially after the crack in the Philippine National Police leadership," said Astro del Castillo, managing director of financial management firm First Grade Holdings Inc.

"It's an added concern for us that there is a growing discontent in the police which could hamper their peace and order program."

Media reports yesterday said PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane fired the agency's head of criminal investigation and detection, Eduardo Matillano, after he accused Ebdane of weak leadership and corruption.

President Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday lifted a moratorium on the death penalty in reaction to public anger over the kidnappings.

The move follows a series of kidnappings targeting the ethnic Chinese community that have added to the perception that Arroyo's government is failing to curb rampant crime.

Del Castillo said the market would continue to trade in a narrow range next week given the absence of positive leads.

"Investors are waiting for more reasons to buy the market. Players could regain interest in the middle next week. We see the market's next range between 1,320 and 1,350," he said.

SM Prime, which has 15 malls across the country, fell 3.08 percent or 20 centavos to P6.30. Analysts said sales of SM malls may suffer on weak consumer confidence given security concerns. *Reuters*

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INFLATION rate rose to 3.3 percent in November from 3.1 percent a year ago as the weakening of the peso and the uptick in oil prices exerted pressure on prices of food and utilities.

This brought the 11-month inflation rate to an average of 3.1 percent, still lower than the government's target of 4.5-5.5 percent for this year.

Citing the latest data on inflation from the National Statistics Office, Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri yesterday said the higher inflation in November was due to the increase in the prices of food, fuel and light.

Consumer prices last month likewise inched up by an average of 0.2 percent month-on-month, faster than the 0.1-percent rise in October.

Neri pointed out that on a monthly basis, the uptick in inflation was brought by the significant increases in the prices of food, beverage and tobacco (0.3 percent).

He added that prices of several food staples went up, specifically fruits and vegetables (2 percent), corn (0.7 percent), fish (0.7 percent) and meat (one percent).

He said that the cost of housing and repairs likewise increased by 0.3 percent from the previous month due to higher prices of cement and other construction materials.

The uptick in the index for electricity was experienced only in areas outside of Metro Manila as the Energy Regulatory Commission granted price adjustments to more electric cooperatives.

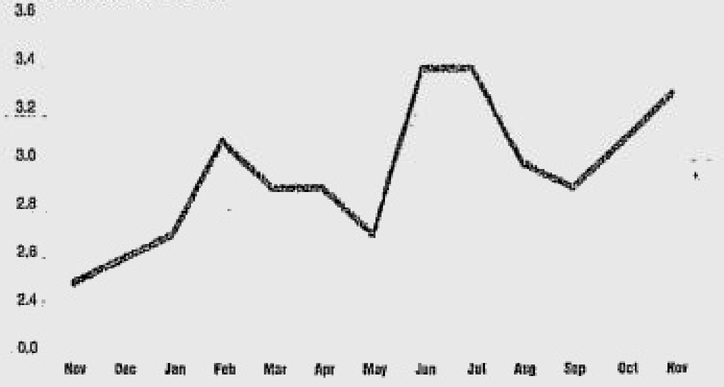
But Neri pointed out that inflation pressure was caused mainly by higher prices in Metro Manila.

"In general, prices in areas outside of Metro Manila remained unchanged while prices of major food and non-food items in Metro Manila went up by 0.5 percent," he said.

Neri explained that there was a month-on-month increase in the prices of agricultural products sourced mainly from the provinces such as eggs (0.5 percent),. fish (0.9 percent), meat (1.9 percent) as well as fruits and vegetables (3.2 percent).

Prices of fuel as well as transportation and communication also increased from the previous month.

INFLATION RATES
November 2002 to November 2003



US firms still bullish on RP

By Michelle V. Remo

AMERICAN firms remain confident in the Philippines' business climate and are committed to continue investing in the country despite the perceived instability caused by the coming elections and peace and order concerns.

Robert Blume, chair of the American Chamber of Commerce trade and investment committee, said in a statement that US companies were keen on maintaining their position as the biggest foreign investors and trading partners of businesses in the Philippines.

Blume said American investments in the country were seen increasing, especially in the area of information technology, which he said was undergoing the "stage of maturity."

The country's call center, business process outsourcing, and other services sector—which emerged in the late 1990s and in which large American companies have invested in—is seen to further expand with the country's growing capability to sustain busi-

US FIRMS/ B4

Banks' dollar deposits rose to $12.7B in November

By Clarissa S. Batino

BANKS' outstanding dollar deposits stood at $12.7 billion as of Nov. 21, up by $681 million or 5.66 percent from $12.02 billion a year ago, latest data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed.

Dollars kept in banks' foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs) were also higher by $41.69 million from $12.6 billion a week ago, according to the BSP.

"The steady growth of the FCDU level of banks is reflective of the continuing confidence of depositors in the banking system," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

The central bank values the stable FCDU deposits as these complement the country's external reserves of $16.8 billion as of end-November.

The peso yesterday closed slightly weaker at 55.36 to a dollar from 55.275 last Thursday. Buenaventura said he was confident that the local currency would continue to recover and firm up to the 55:$1 level by year's end.

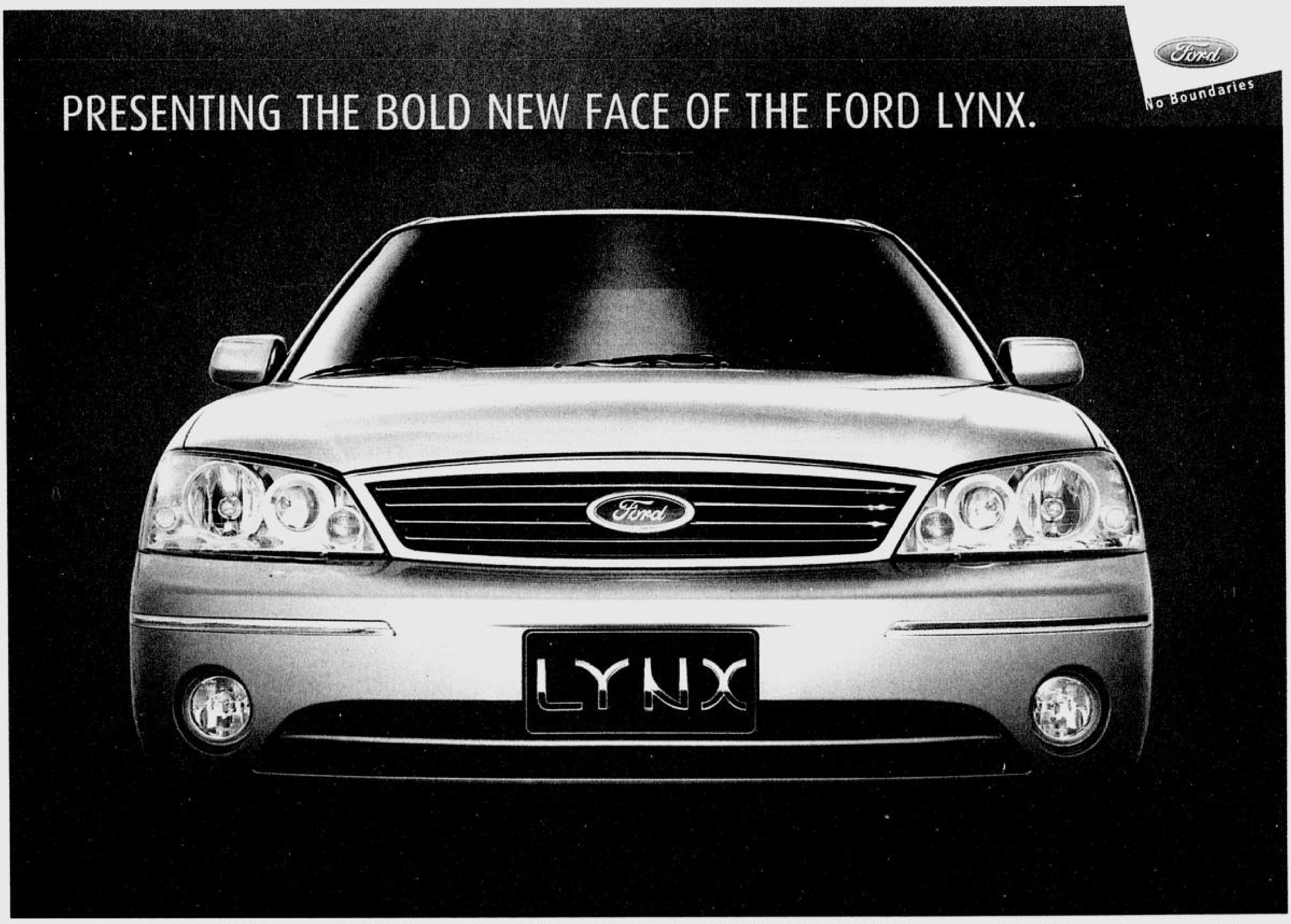
He said he believed the peso would remain "stable at current levels even in the first quarter of 2004."

But the substantial increase in FCDU deposits this year alerted the central bank to the practice of local investors of buying dollars in the spot market, placing these temporarily in dollar accounts, and then using the funds to buy dollar-denominated sovereign debt papers.

While rising dollar deposits signal a stable capital flow, the increasing level was somewhat suspicious to regulators.

In early September, the policy-making Monetary Board issued a circular prohibiting local investors from buying dollars from the spot market and using the same to invest in government bonds.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said the week-on-week movement in November reflected the usual transactions and the central bank did not spot any irregularity.



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HPI project seen to post ₱500M in revenue

LEISURE estate developer Highlands Prime Inc. yesterday reported that its maiden project—The Woodridge in plush Tagaytay Highlands—was now 65 percent sold, only a year after its launching.

HPI, which is controlled by retail tycoon Henry Sy, told the Philippine Stock Exchange that the first four of 90 units put up for sale was recently turned over to the new owners.

The project was launched in October last year and the construction of the first 12 units was finished in 10 months. Two other buildings consisting of 48 units will be completed in the next two months, HPI added.

The Woodridge is a complex of medium density condominium buildings. HPI expects P500 million in revenue from the sale of these units this year.

The project weaves timber and other stone structures with the natural contours of the mountain to create a tree-lined, flower-strewn landscape that aims to provide occupants with a vacation-like ambience.

HPI is also building model houses in the Tagaytay Midlands subdivisions.

The company began commercial operations in February last year and debuted on the second board of the PSE in April last year.

Last year, HPI registered net revenues of P90 million, resulting in a gross profit of P32 million and a net income of P21 million.

The company was created by Belle Corp. to continue the development of Tagaytay Highlands leisure estate over the next 50 years. It has authorized capital stock of P4 billion.

Doris C. Dumlao

No glut, no glory

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

SCIENCE still cannot explain it, but here in the Philippines, mankind always yields to this need to build things, particularly in the last few months before … well, the elections.

In the streets of Metro Manila, for one, you can see construction workers doing nothing but digging everything on site that does not wear skirts.

Just when you start to think that all the diggings are done, in no time at all, you then see the construction workers move on and do some more diggings.

We, the people who live or work or shop in Pasig City, hereby thank the bright guys behind the construction of a flyover on Meralco Avenue across J. Vargas Street.

Both the timing and the planning are impeccable—no alternate routes, no prior warning, no traffic master plan, and no timetable. What else is new?

And they must begin construction just when the usual heavy traffic in the area is about to become, ahh, absolutely horrendous during the Christmas season.

* * *

WE always have a mini construction boom prior to elections. Always! Yet nobody can say if some politicos just need the kickbacks to finance their campaign.

Surprisingly, cement prices are holding. Despite the pre-election public works frenzy, cement prices are the lowest in the region and among the lowest in the world.

That's why a Japanese company called Southern Cross Cement Corp. thinks that only it, among the many players in the cement industry, including the users, has the guts to achieve glory by doing something about the silly low prices.

I just found out that Southern Cross is moving heaven and earth, plus its various lawyers, to pressure the DTI to remove the tariff on cement importation.

If the company succeeds and Trade Secretary Mar Roxas lifts the defensive P20-per-bag tariff on cement, the local cement industry is certain to die.

With the death of the local makers, cement importers like Southern Cross will then dictate the prices. Of course they will bring the prices up to the stratosphere.

* * *

NOW Southern Cross is the local subsidiary of Taiheyo Cement. This is the largest cement maker in Japan. There, they only happen to have a gloriously huge cement glut.

Moreover, the whole region is making more cement than it can use, creating a total glut of 200 million tons every year.

The glut alone is some 17 to 18 times our total market here. If we open our doors to that kind of glut, the local industry will be buried alive.

Only last June, no wonder, Roxas imposed a definitive tariff on cement, as a way to defend the local industry against "dumping."

Some cement importers of course claimed that the measure would bring up cement prices. It was just a big lie.

Today, as I said, local cement prices are the lowest in the region. They are even 23 percent lower than the prices before we applied the Roxas defense.

* * *

ASIDE from the drop in prices, which is good for those building their dream houses, the cement industry now sees a little hope for survival. Meaning, no more lay-offs!

Southern Cross perhaps does not like the situation. In a recent public hearing with the DTI, the lawyers of Southern Cross attacked the Roxas-imposed tariff.

News accounts talked about the hearing as having been filled to SRO capacity. Labor, industry and consumers groups were present.

Everybody in the hearing was in favor of the tariff, except the busy lawyers of Southern Cross, who have been filing cases after cases against Roxas.

But then they chose to articulate their argument in a "position paper." The lawyers could not be bothered to, er, "articulate" their position during the hearing.

Present in the hearing were only the people who would lose their jobs, if Roxas listened to the lawyers, and he allowed the local cement industry to die.

* * *

ANYWAY, the story of the cement industry is typical of the one-way street in the international trade liberalization in the glorious name of globalization.

And so the Japanese company wants this country to open up its market to Japanese cement. Yet the cement market in Japan is as tightly closed as a tomb.

To deliver cement to Japan, for instance, you need terminals. There, they do not buy cement by the bags. More than 90 percent of the market uses bulk cement.

Thus you need the terminals, which luckily are controlled by the Japanese cement companies, which in turn do not allow anybody else to use them.

By sheer stroke of luck, in a happy coincidence, the Japanese government does not issue new permits for cement terminals.

There is just one way for Philippine cement manufacturers to get into the Japanese market. And that is, someday we just have to conquer and occupy Japan.

* * *

COME on, it is impossible for local cement companies to sell to Japan. Southern Cross sees no problem. *Basta*, we have to open up our market to Japanese cement.

Countries like ours, in other words, must follow the WTO, which dictates that trade measures of its members be transparent, meaning, all done through tariff.

Because we believe in the WTO, we follow its commandments. Rich countries like Japan don't have to, because they can always resort to non-tariff trade barriers.

Besides, all other countries in Asia already tried to limit their cement importation by imposing tariff way up to the neighboring galaxy.

Taiwan imposes a 100-percent tariff on Philippine cement, for instance. Malaysia has 50 percent, and Vietnam, 40 percent.

Obviously, everybody else is relying on defense for a chance to win a little in this beggar-thy-neighbor cement trade game. Everybody, except the Philippines!

* * *

AT least that's what the Filipino lawyers of Southern Cross wanted Roxas to do. In effect, they wanted to flood the local market with the cement glut from Japan.

Reports said that the glut in Japan is about 15 million tons, which is actually nothing compared to the 200 million ton glut in the region.

But taken alongside the Philippine market, the glut in Japan is bigger than the bellies of our police generals. Our market is only 12 million tons a year.

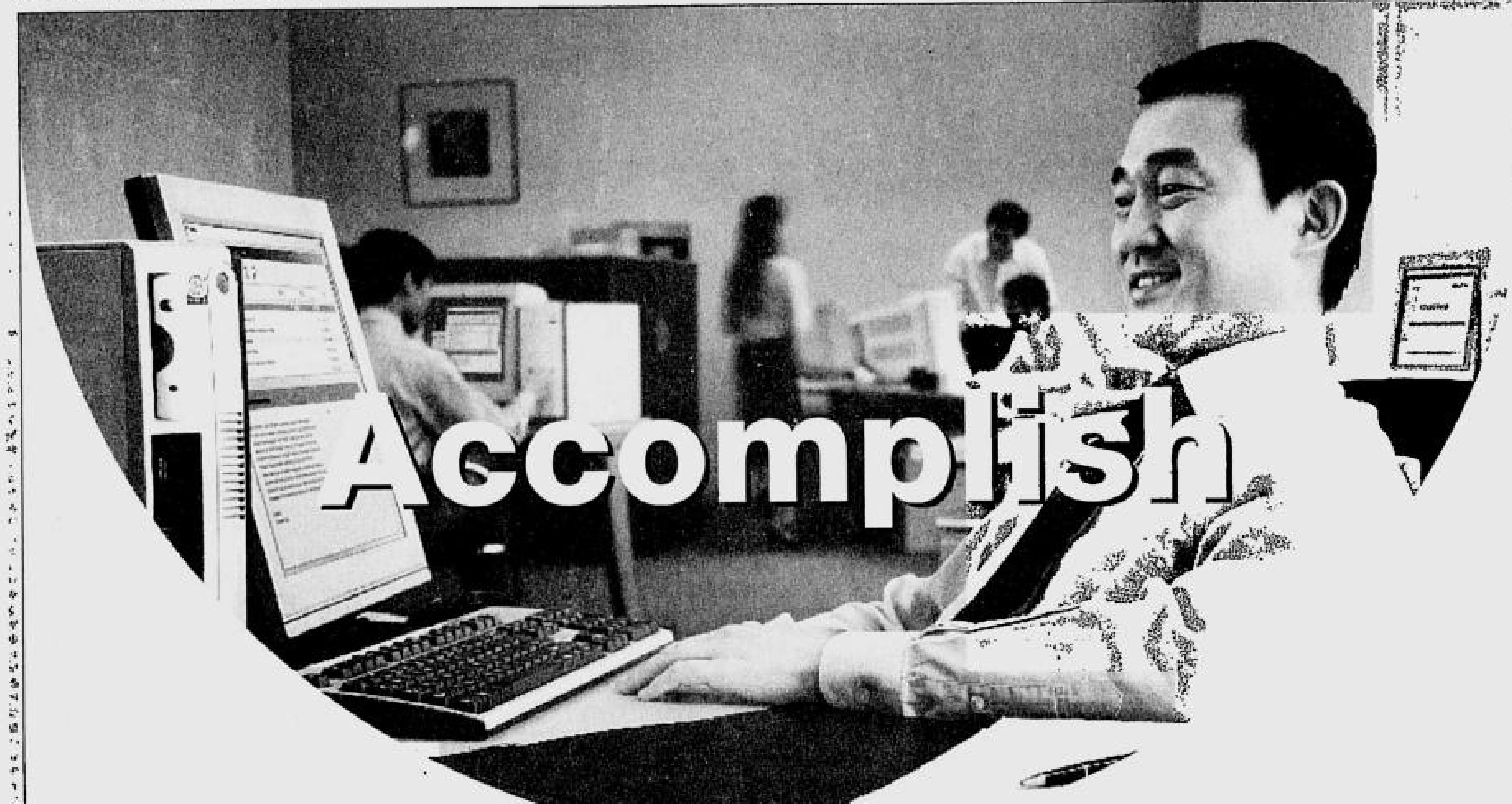
As they said in the recent DTI hearing, if only 5 percent of the region's glut finds a way into the local market, we are dead.

For that's already 10 million tons, versus the local market of 12 million tons. And where will we pick up the local industry—from all the diggings in the streets?

Buried alive at this time, the local cement industry can never hope to recover. There go thousands of jobs. There also go our hope to build our dream houses.

A clear example of what happens when the local industry is allowed to die, and we just rely on imports, can be seen in steel.

Today, with National Steel gone, the prices of steel products are up by 30 percent. Most of them are, of course, imported!



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BSP accredits local rating agency

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has accredited Philippine Rating Service Corp. or Philratings to do credit rating on domestic banks.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said monetary authorities had authorized PhilRatings to assess the creditworthiness of domestic financial institutions in terms of their compliance with BSP requirements.

Philratings can now rate the commercial papers and other debt instruments issued by banks.

Philratings, according to BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes, met all accreditation requirements imposed by the board, including the level of capitalization. It also has a pool of well-trained analysts and professional staff with the required five-year experience in rating banks and financial institutions.

Reyes noted that a rating firm's independence was also important. An accredited rating agency should not be affiliated with any bank or financial institution.

Buenaventura said PhilRatings was the first credit rating agency to be duly recognized by the BSP under its guidelines. *Clarissa S. Batino*

Finance wants RP to remain under IMF monitoring

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance yesterday said it would support the extension of the country's no-loan, post-program monitoring arrangement with the International Monetary Fund in view of the prevailing political certainties.

"We believe that there is a need for us to remain under the IMF monitoring especially during times of volatility," said Finance Officer-in-Charge Juanita Amatong.

However, the finance chief cleared that the Philippines had no intention of asking any financial assistance from the IMF.

The decision on these issues will be jointly made by the IMF and the Philippines after an ongoing review of the country's performance by an IMF team, according to a central bank official. The review is scheduled to end on Dec. 16.

"We have no intention of going back into any loan arrangement with the IMF. But I think a monitoring should be maintained because it is important for the investors," added the finance official.

Diwa Guinigundo, managing director of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, said that a factor that the IMF and the Philippine government would consider in determining the direction of the monitoring arrangement was the sustainability of the country's fiscal discipline.

He added that while the country had reduced its obligations with the IMF to below 100 percent of the quota, this was not the only factor that would be considered in making the decision.

"The IMF will also assess whether the Philippines is ready to get out of the PPM. We should have a credible economic and fiscal program to ensure sustainability. And one of their concerns is the fiscal sector especially in 2004," said Guinigundo.

"There is no doubt now that we will meet the P202-billion deficit target this year but the issue lies on next year's performance," added the BSP official.

Guinigundo said there was no reason for the Philippines not to terminate the post program monitoring deal if it really wanted to.

Napocor to tap coal supply from South Africa, 2 others

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NATIONAL Power Corp. said it was diversifying its sources of coal in anticipation of a cut in supply from China, currently its main source of coal.

Napocor president Rogelio M. Murga said in a statement that the company was moving to secure coal imports from Australia, South Africa and Russia as well as additional volumes from Indonesia.

"(The company) needs more flexibility in choosing its coal suppliers," Murga said.

The statement came in the wake of a possible cut in China's coal exports due to a directive from the State Council of China ordering Chinese coal producers to prioritize local demand.

Despite this, Murga said several options remained open to Napocor in the event of a shortage.

"For one, (local coal producer) Semirara Mining Corp. has signified its willingness to supply the 600-megawatt Masinloc power complex at least 60,000 metric tons a month," he said.

Murga added that Napocor had also sounded out three of its existing Indonesian suppliers—PT Indominco, PT Arutmin and PT Jorong—for additional shipments.

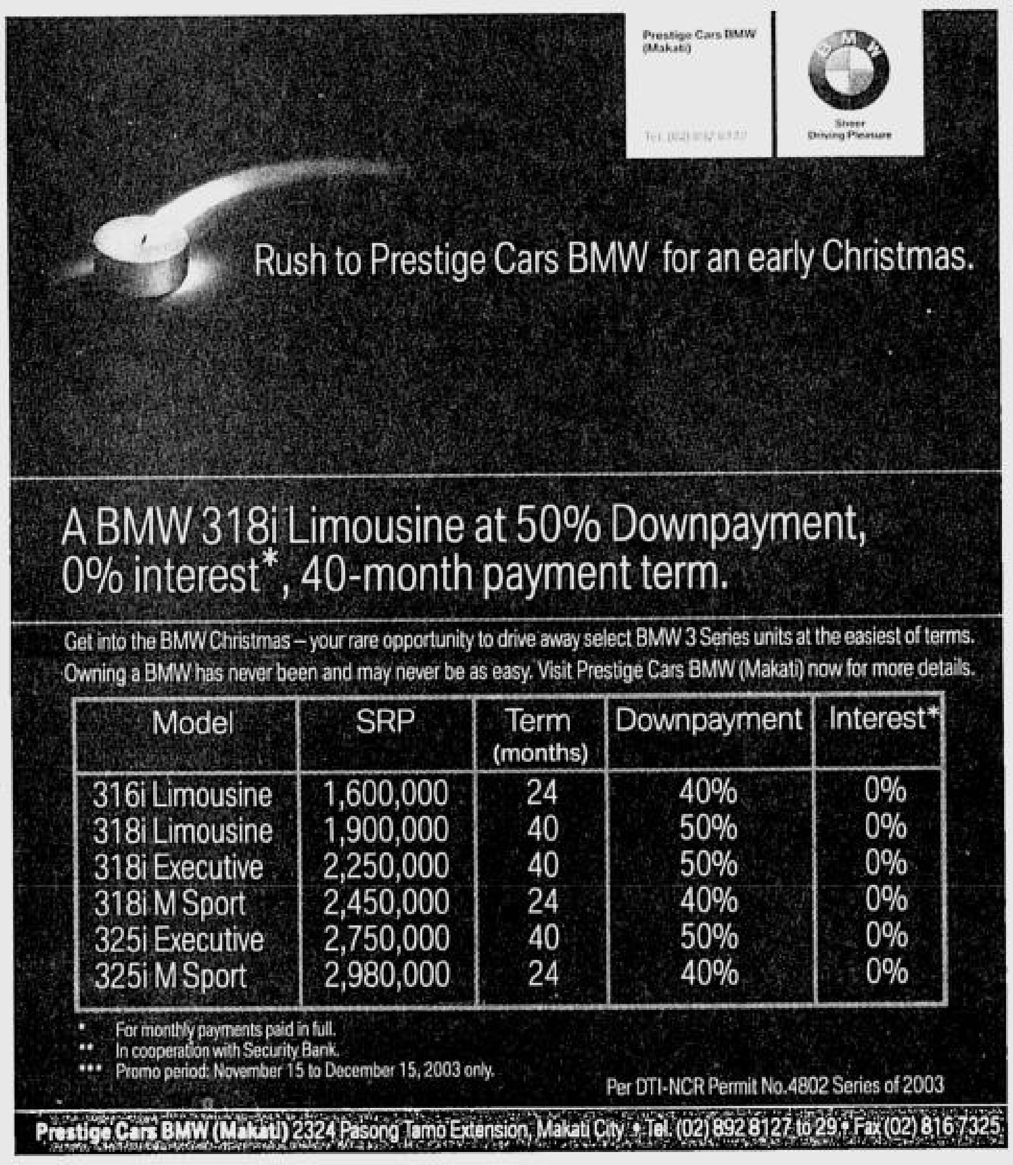
He said further that Napocor had asked for the Department of Energy's go-ahead for the importation of coal from alternative sources.

Napocor is planning to conduct a limited bidding for Australian and Indonesian suppliers in the next few weeks.

Coal accounts for the biggest share of Napocor's power generation mix.

In the first half of 2003, coal-fired plants represented 32.37 percent of the mix. For the whole of 2002, coal accounted for 37.82 percent of Napocor's entire electricity supply.

The tight supply of coal from China had prompted Napocor to increase is budget for the usual 325,000-ton contracts to $15.6 million (about P864 million) from P10.9 million (about P600 million).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318i M Sport	2,450,000	24	40%	0%
325i Executive	2,750,000	40	50%	0%
325i M Sport	2,980,000	24	40%	0%

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Bush lifts steel tariffs in face of threatened global trade war

TOP Chinese steel makers, including Baosteel, welcomed the US decision to scrap controversial tariffs on steel imports, saying it could prop up their bottom lines. REUTERS

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush scrapped import tariffs he had imposed last year to help the battered US steel industry, defusing a threatened trade war with Europe, Japan and South Korea.

Bush declared Thursday that the 21 months the steep tariffs had been in place had given the US industry a chance to consolidate and modernize and were no longer needed as a result of "changed economic circumstances."

Within minutes, the European Union said it was withdrawing its $2.2 billion list of targeted products.

"These sanctions ... were there as a tool for compliance," EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy said Thursday. "They've complied and the sanctions will disappear."

Japan and South Korea also backed away from a threat to penalize US imports with retaliatory tariffs.

However, the decision prompted an angry response from the US steel industry and its political supporters, who accused Bush of breaking a campaign promise and turning his back on an industry that was still in need of protection from unfair foreign competition.

"In his rush to appease the Europeans and the Japanese, Mr. Bush willfully ignored the fact that damage to the American steel industry and American steel communities continues to this day," said Leo W. Gerard, president of the United Steelworkers of America. Gerard said 42 steel companies had gone bankrupt over the past five years.

Senator Robert Byrd said the Bush administration "shattered any credibility it ever had with the steel industry in West Virginia and across the country."

Imposing the tariffs had won the president support in steel states such as West Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania, all considered important to his reelection chances next year. But that action last year had come under heavy attack from states dominated by steel-consuming industries that were forced to pay higher prices because of the protective tariffs.

Bush's action also was criticized by Democrats campaigning for his job.

Former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean said that despite Bush's claims, "the steel industry needs additional breathing room to get back on its feet." Congressman Dick Gephardt said Bush's action demonstrated a "callous disregard for the workers and the communities whose jobs and livelihoods have been decimated by unfair competition." Former Gen. Wesley Clark said Bush needed to "listen to the 2.6 million manufacturing workers who've lost their jobs" while he has been in office.

However, Republican free-trade supporters and industries hurt by the steel tariffs praised Bush's decision, saying it had averted a debilitating tit-for-tat fight with some of America's biggest trading partners. *AP*

Sony changes 'Made in Japan' tag

TOKYO—For Sony Corp., it's been the same problem for the last decade: half of its electronics manufacturing costs come from Japan, compared to only 30 percent of revenues.

But after April's "Sony shock"—a $1 billion loss for the fourth quarter—the electronics and entertainment giant says it must now solve this problem, once and for all.

"For some simple tasks, we can buy a machine, train an operator and it doesn't have to be made in Japan," Sony's chief production officer, Minoru Morio, told Reuters in an interview last week.

A remedy of job cuts, plant closures and a shift to China would be a bitter pill to swallow for Sony.

Japan's electronics industry must balance a need to shift production overseas to be price-competitive against Asian rivals with not alienating itself from Japanese consumers concerned about a hollowing-out of the country's manufacturing sector.

Hitachi Ltd., Japan's biggest electronics maker by revenues, uses the slogan "Next: Made in Japan," but plans to manufacture 60 percent of its white goods overseas by 2005 compared with 40 percent now.

Sony intends to halt production of bulky cathode ray tube televisions for commercial use at two domestic plants this year and cut 20,000 jobs, including 7,000 in Japan.

Morio, 64, who spearheaded a team of engineers to develop Sony's "Handy-cam" video camera in the 1980s, now must shave production costs as head of the company's Engineering Manufacturing and Customer Service (EMCS) division.

"It might not be the best idea to make the same products in our five regions (Japan, the United States, Europe, Asia and China). Instead, we should have each region play a different role," said the silver-haired Morio.

This change in philosophy is a core aspect of Sony's October restructuring plan, which it hopes will lift operating profit to 10 percent of sales in 2006/07 from 2.5 percent last year.

His goal is to slash 80 billion yen ($739 million), about one percent of group sales, in annual fixed costs by 2006/07 through a 30 percent reduction in floor space for service, distribution and production and a 90 percent cut in the number of parts used. *Reuters*

Asia-Pacific welcomes US' decision on steel

TOKYO—Asia-Pacific countries on Friday hailed US President George W. Bush's decision to end illegal tariffs on steel imports as a vindication for fair trade rules.

Japan led the chorus of cheers saying it was pleased with the decision but cautioned it would keep a close watch on US monitoring of steel imports, which it warned could be used to protect the US steel sector.

New Zealand said the US decision to abandon the tariffs was a victory for New Zealand and the World Trade Organization while South Korea said it would help to facilitate free trade.

The US decision came in response to a successful challenge through the WTO dispute settlement system by eight countries including Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and China.

Bush announced Thursday he would rescind the tariffs. He had had little choice after the WTO ruled last month that they were illegal and major trading partners vowed massive retaliation.

Yasuo Fukuda, Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary, said Tokyo "greatly welcomed" the US decision, noting his country had dropped a threat made last week to impose retaliatory sanctions.

"We highly appreciate the fact that President Bush believes in free trade," he said, while noting a lingering concern over the import monitoring system the US says will be maintained.

In its announcement Thursday, the Bush administration promised to intensify monitoring to avert any surge in steel imports after the tariffs are dismantled.

An official at the steel division of Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said: "We do not consider this monitoring system a protectionist measure but will keep a close watch on it to prevent it from being used to protect the domestic industry."

The official also noted the US safeguards had prompted other nations to impose similar special tariffs on steel imports.

"We hope those countries ... namely China ... will scrap the trade barriers," he said.

China, for its part, made no comment Friday on the US change of heart, although it applauded the WTO ruling last month that US steel tariffs violated global trading rules.

New Zealand Trade Negotiations Minister Jim Sutton said the US decision was "a victory for New Zealand and the rules-based system which the WTO represents."

"The successful result in the steel case now shows the benefits of the WTO dispute settlement system for New Zealand are not limited to the agricultural sector," Sutton said. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 5, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	4,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	44.5	44.5	43.5	44	357,100
Citystate Savings Bank	15	15	15	15	2,200
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34.5	35	34.5	35	141,300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	350,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	27	26	26	328,000
Philippine National Bank	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	3,300
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	6,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	19,600
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Abacus Financial	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	30,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1755	1755	1755	1755	1,590
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.32	1.34	376,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1375	1375	1355	1365	800
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	8,600
Diversified Fin. Network	2	2	2	2	2,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.68	0.69	0.68	0.68	1,130,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	745	745	735	745	16,970
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.037	0.035	0.037	2,100,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	12,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.84	0.85	0.84	0.84	2,410,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	800	820	800	805	208,260
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	9,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	15.25	14.75	15	162,100
Manila Electric Co. B	23.25	24	23.25	23.75	2,386,300
Petron Corp.	2.18	2.2	2.18	2.18	3,606,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.28	633,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	93,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	450,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.95	1	0.95	1	330,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	1,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.5	16.75	16.5	16.5	71,500
San Miguel Corp. A	54.5	55.5	54.5	55	24,800
San Miguel Corp. B	62	64	62	63	197,900
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	58,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	300,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.95	4.95	4.9	4.95	11,970,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.15	145,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	20,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	1,240,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	40,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.19	1,850,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	200,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	100,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	50,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	19	19.25	18.75	18.75	398,600
Ionics Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	95,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.98	2	1.98	2	12,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	1,103,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	940,000
Music Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	1,170,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	10,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	150,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.0875	0.0875	2,100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Chemical Ind. of the Phil	25	25	25	25	1,600,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.8	3	2.65	2.65	34,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	100,000
Pryce Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	300,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	30,200
Steniel Manufacturing	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.59	0.59	0.58	0.58	1,100,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	430,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	26	26	25	25	241,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,500
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.0006	0.0006	0.0006	0.0006	13,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	400	400	400	400	820
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.4	4,232,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.135	810,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	450,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.04	3,143,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	220,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.5	6.3	6.3	10,267,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.23	0.235	0.23	0.235	1,010,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	2,770,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	23,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	104,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	1,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	4,900,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	6,700,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	1,100,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0.0034	0.003	0.0034	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	1,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	1,700,000

US firms . . .

From page B1

nesses in this said sector.

Blume added that the electronics manufacturing industry, which accounts for about 70 percent of Philippine exports and more than 300,000 direct employment, would further develop and penetrate larger foreign markets.

Although some foreign companies in the Philippines are relocating their manufacturing facilities in other countries, Blume said they were poised to keep their marketing arms here.

Amcham chair for legislative affairs John Forbes, however, said the government and the private sector should exert extra effort in improving the country's competitiveness to attract more foreign investments.

He said the country should address various issues concerning business, and undertake reforms that would make it easier for foreign companies to set up offices here.

Japan economy keeps growth momentum

TOKYO—Japan's economic recovery is keeping up its momentum on the back of robust exports and better company profits, but consumer spending remains depressed, government data suggested on Friday

The diffusion index of leading economic indicators for October rose to 88.9—the highest since February 2000—from a revised 66.7 a month earlier.

The leading index, measured on a scale of 100 and compiled using data such as the number of new job offers, consumer sentiment and Tokyo share prices, signals economic conditions over the next few months.

It is the sixth straight month in which it has been at or above the neutral 50 level, which marks the difference between an expected economic expansion or a contraction in coming months.

"This suggests that economic activity will continue to expand in the near term," said Ryo Hino, an economist at JP Morgan.

The coincident index, which indicates current economic conditions, shot up to 100 from a revised 90.9 in September, the Cabinet Office said.

The indices are regarded as volatile and the Cabinet Office revises them several times before issuing final figures.

A Cabinet Office official warned against being too optimistic.

"The strong figures do not mean the economy is without problems," he said.

Household spending data, announced separately, highlighted that slow consumer demand continues to be one of the weakest areas of Japan's economy.

Overall household spending fell 0.8 percent in October from the same month last year in real terms.

The average household spent 301,404 yen ($2,785) during the month. On a seasonally adjusted basis, spending fell a real 1.2 percent from September.

Other data have suggested the economy is still recovering but at a slower pace than earlier this year.

A survey by the Ministry of Finance on Thursday showed that business sentiment turned positive in October-December for the first time in 11 quarters.

But capital spending rose a meagre 0.4 percent in July-September from the same period last year, compared with a 6.4 percent rise in April-June. Some economists said that showed the pace of recovery was slowing.

Markets showed little reaction to Friday's data, with traders citing greater interest in Middle East violence and US payroll data. *Reuters*

DISCLOSURES

SAN Miguel Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 20, 2 p.m. with record date on Feb. 17. The company declared a cash dividend of P0.35 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of Dec. 19 and will be payable on Jan. 26.

***

PHILIPPINE Estates Corp. disclosed the resignation of Enrico Molina as assistant vice president for finance of the company.

***

ELECTED officers of **CADP Group Corp.** were Pedro Roxas, executive chair and Miguel Gaspar, president and CEO.

***

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. bought 55,000 of its own shares at P1.32 per share. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

China soon to be 4th biggest exporter

BEIJING—Trade juggernaut China is set to become the world's fourth largest trading nation this year, overtaking France to leave it behind only the United States, Japan and Germany, state media said Friday.

Vice Commerce Minister Wei Jianguo based his bold prediction on the country's rapidly surging shipments of electronics and merchandise so far in 2003, the China Daily reported.

"At (the current) rate, China's rank in the world trading community will rise to fourth by the end of the year," the newspaper said, quoting Wei.

According to figures from the World Trade Organization (WTO), China was the world's fifth largest merchandise exporter in 2002 with $325.6 billion.

That put it right behind France, with $331.8 billion, and well ahead of Britain, with $279.6 billion.

By excluding trade in services, and leaving out imports, however, Wei chose a rather narrow measure for China's trade performance.

If both exports and imports in goods and services are included, China remained behind Britain and France in 2002 and looks unlikely to catch up this year.

According to this broader measure, Chinese imports and exports totaled $706.3 billion last year, making it number six in the world.

The same set of WTO data showed Britain ahead, in 2002 with trade amounting to $849.4 billion, followed by France with $815.2 billion.

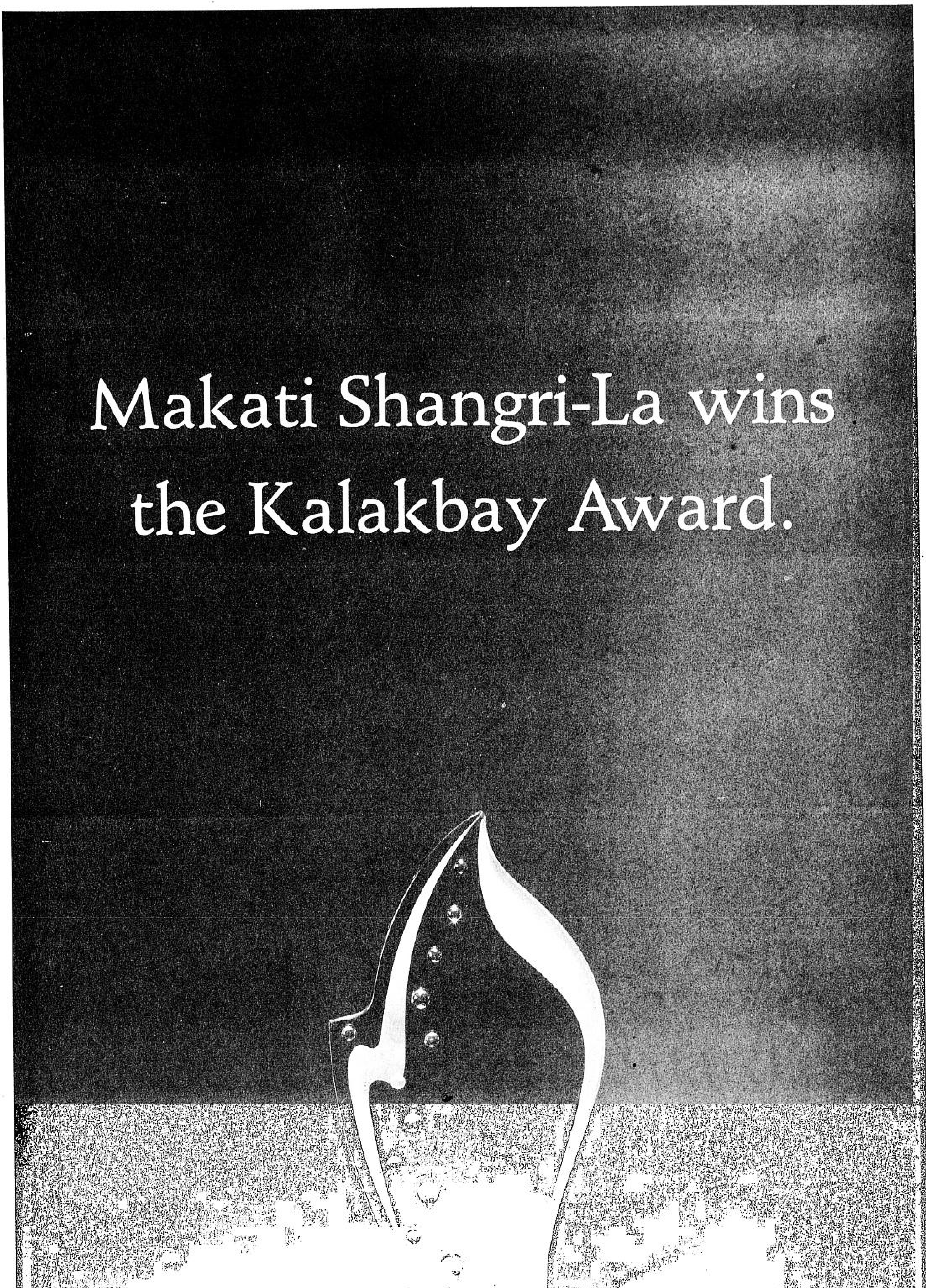
If China is indeed to make history and outpace France in exports of merchandise this year, special credit is likely to go to Chinese producers of machinery and electronics.

Exports of machinery and electronics products rose 42.1 percent to %178.45 billion in the first 10 months.

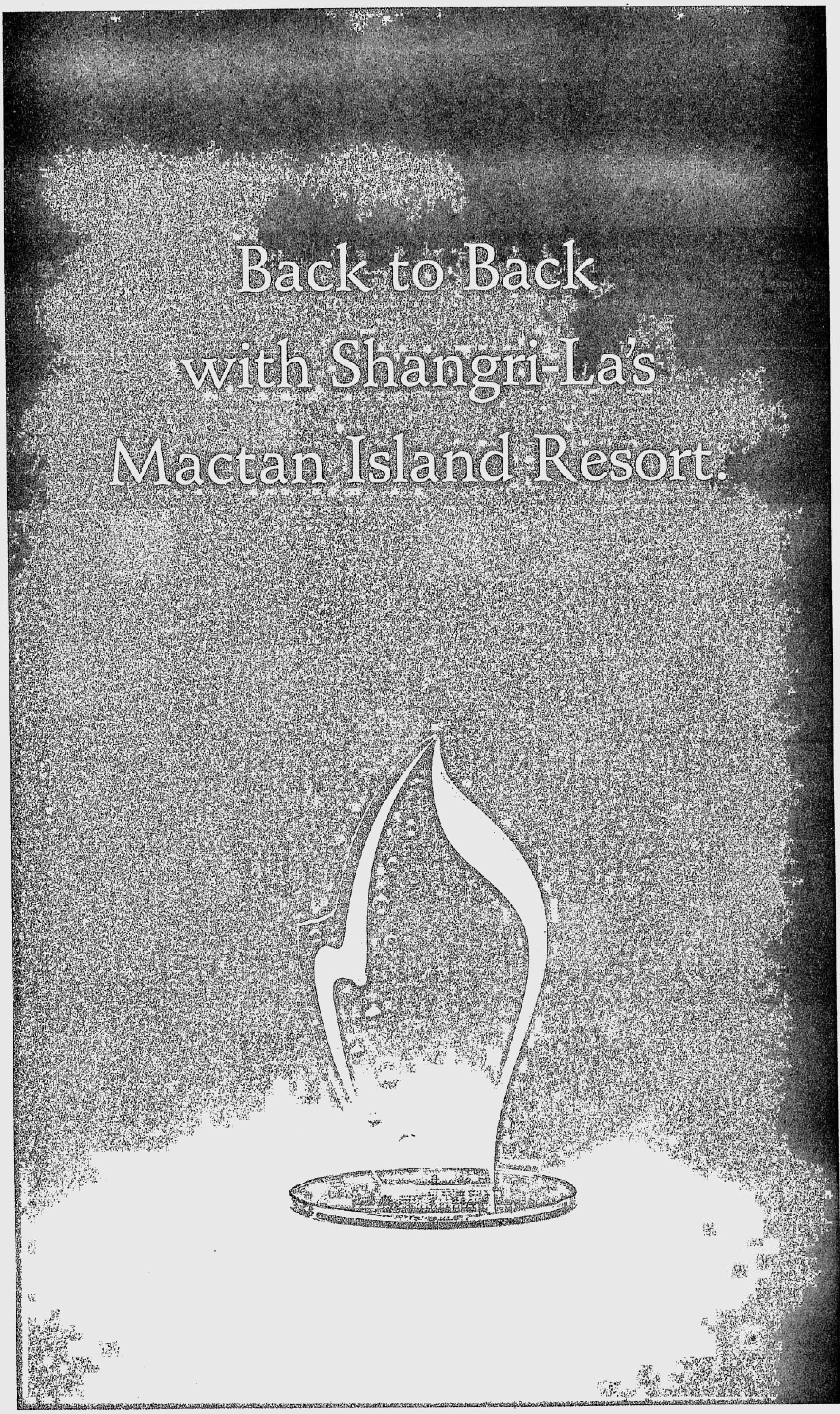
For the full year, that particular category of merchandise is likely to exceed $190 billion, Wei said, according to the newspaper. *AFP*

CURRENCIES

December 5, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.827061	1.000000	55.294000
Japan	Yen	0.007644	0.009242	0.511000
United Kingdom	Pound	1.425110	1.723100	95.277100
Hongkong	Dollar	0.106501	0.128770	7.120200
Switzerland	Franc	0.641979	0.776217	42.920100
Canada	Dollar	0.631104	0.763068	42.193100
Singapore	Dollar	0.482392	0.583260	32.250800
Australia	Dollar	0.606750	0.733622	40.564900
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.193914	2.652661	146.676200
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.220550	0.266667	14.745100
Brunei	Dollar	0.480989	0.581564	32.157000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000098	0.000118	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.020734	0.025069	1.386200
UAE	Dirham	0.225204	0.272294	15.056200
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.209100	66.856000
Argentina	Peso	0.278941	0.337268	18.648900
Brazil	Real	0.281409	0.340252	18.813900
Denmark	Kroner	0.134366	0.162462	8.983200
India	Rupee	0.018142	0.021935	1.212900
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.217677	0.263193	14.553000
Mexico	New Peso	0.073799	0.089230	4.933900
New Zealand	Dollar	0.533623	0.645203	35.675900
Norway	Kroner	0.123723	0.149593	8.271600
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014421	0.017437	0.964200
South Africa	Rand	0.132118	0.159744	8.832900
Korea	Won	0.000695	0.000840	0.046400
Sweden	Kroner	0.111576	0.134907	7.459500
Syria	Pound	0.018848	0.022789	1.260100
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024311	0.029394	1.625300
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000519	0.000627	0.034700



Makati Shangri-La wins the Kalakbay Award.



Makati Shangri-La
MANILA

We're proud to be the recipient of not just one but two Kalakbay Awards this year from the Department of Tourism. This caps the 10 other awards we received from prestigious award-giving bodies that include Business Traveller Asia-Pacific, Travel + Leisure, American Academy of Hospitality Sciences, Global Finance New York and even TIME Readers' Travel Choice and Reader's Digest SuperBrand Hall of Fame. Which just goes to show that when it comes to world-class, award-winning service, Shangri-La is at the forefront.

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Globe unwraps the newest phones for Christmas at the Hub

COUNT on Globe to launch the newest, most exciting cellphones in a fantastic acoustic extravaganza top-billed by singing sensations Rahda and Jimmy Bondoc. Thousands of shoppers flocked to the Globe Hub in Glorietta to witness Globe unwrap its great gift ideas for Christmas: 12 new phones that cater to every personality while giving you the best in connectivity.

Early that afternoon, Globe's models had roamed the Glorietta with wrapped, mysterious gifts, piquing the interest of the shopping crowd. The models led onlookers to the Globe Hub where the concert and phone launch was to take place.

Hosts JM Roriguez and Bianca Araneta introduced each phone while Rahda and Jimmy sang songs that described each unit. Delighted cellphone savvy spectators could only marvel at Globe G-Plans' 12 new units that were beyond amazing: Bird S288, Nokia 1100 (free on all G-Plans) , Samsung C100 (free on G-Mix Plan 800), Siemens MC60, Nokia 3100 (free on G-Talk Plan 1200), Nokia 3200 (free on G-Talk Plus Plan 1800), Sony Ericsson Z600, Panasonic G50 (free on G-Match Plan 2500), Nokia 6220, Nokia 6600 (free on G-Max Plan 3500), Sony Ericsson P900, and , Treo 600 (free on Platinum Plan at 5000 monthly).

To signify how she felt about Globe's new phones, Radha scintillated the audience with her soulful renditions of "Overjoyed," "Natural woman," "Never let you go," "So into you," "On and on," and "Make it happen." For his part, Jimmy Bondoc's acoustic acrobatics thrilled the audience who were also busy taking his photos via their Globe Handyphones. His songs "You're my everything," "Moonlight over Paris," "There's no such thing," "Change the world," "Because of you," "Sleep all day," and "Grow old with you" relayed how he and people in the audience felt about Globe's many innovations, including its latest handsets. Even host JM Rodriguez got into the groove of the fun, freewheeling concert, joining Jimmy Bondoc for a duet in one of the numbers.

Even the audience got into the swing of things by joining an innovative new version of the scavenger hunt, which was given a mobile twist by Globe. The audience was encouraged to scour the mall to take MMS pictures of certain items (with their Globe Handyphones, of course) which they had to send to hosts Bianca and JM. Winners received Britney Spears and John Mayer CDs, body sprays and a digital camera.

The biggest winners at the event were Rene Loy Estoesta and Doreen Chua who won a Sony Ericsson P900 and the Nokia 6600 respectively, just by signing up for any of Globe's G-Plans that day.

"These new handsets, combined with a G-Plan, make the perfect gift for everyone this Christmas. We are very happy to have had so many people watch Globe unwrap these gifts and we encourage everyone to also reward themselves by experiencing the exciting and unique features of each of these phones. Not only that, any G-Plan they get also gives them flexibility made possible by the G-Plan Opti-Sim, the most powerful SIM in the world, and access to MyGlobe which is a perfect tool for subscribers to personalize their mobile phones," said Matthew Carreon, Globe Handyphone product manager for postpaid.

GLOBE product manager Matthew Carreon awards a Nokia 6600 cellphone to the luckiest G-Plan subscriber who signed for a G-Talk Plan 1200 that day, Doreen Chua (right) and her son, Kenneth (center).

In all, Globe's event was an engaging afternoon of beautiful voices, exciting games and prizes, and of course, a shopper's delight as people started signing for a G-Plan to get one of the twelve newest phones.

Join in the Christmas frenzy by going to any Globe Business Center or Hub nationwide to get these newest handsets and you'll soon find out why there are more people on G-Plans than any other mobile service.

JIMMY Bondoc sings about Globe's new phones.

A SHOPPER trying out the Nokia 6600 before getting it for free on a G-Max Plan.

GLOBE unwraps its newest handsets - all free on a G-Plan.

JM, BIANCA and Jimmy Bondoc -- G-plan subscribers all.

VENTURE 7 BAZAAR

Photo shows socialite Baby Arenas and Gina de Venecia, wife of speaker Joe de Venecia cutting the ceremonial ribbon in the opening of Venture 7 Christmas Bazaar. Their next bazaar is on Dec. 7, Sunday, from, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Ballroom of Hotel Intercontinenal. Members of Venture 7 are (from left): Linda Villadelgado, Lita Gelano, Celine Bautista, Pilie Aquino, Chit Gohu, Fortune Ledesma and Fanny Blanco.

Jollibee and DepEd (NCR) put values formation at the heart of education

HUMAN values are one of the essentials of human life. Examples of human values that are usually taught by our elders are the values of love, justice, nationalism, respect, and compassion, to name a few. These values help us build a healthy relationship with our society and our environment.

In a study sponsored by UNESCO and conducted by the Department of Education - National Capital Region (DepEd-NCR), it identified that values education is the area that needs more emphasis in the current Philippine education system. Sociologists noted that the lack of understanding, appreciation and internalization of the values of nationalism among the Filipino youth can impact negatively on our country's future progress.

Coming from this perspective, Jollibee, DepEd (NCR) and Mary Lindbert International formed a partnership in putting values formation at the heart of education through the "Ang Batang Pinoy ay Jollibee Kid" Values Education Program. This program is in line with Jollibee's strong advocacy of values formation and child empowerment as emulated by its various children's projects.

"We have long been wanting to institutionalize our efforts on values formation. With the Department of Education as our partner in this endeavor, we would be able to help in nation building through strengthening values formation in our education system," Jollibee Vice President for Marketing Inez Reyes said.

Reyes added, "Jollibee is consistent in promoting child empowering activities through reading programs, gift-giving projects and values education. These activities show that Jollibee Kids are well-rounded kids for other children to emulate."

For almost four months since the launching of this five-year program, the "Ang Batang Pinoy ay Jollibee Kid" has already implemented values education in the classrooms starting with selected pilot schools within the National Capital Region.

"Our studies have shown that children are highly receptive between Grades 1 and 2. These are the so-called prime formative years which is the main reason why we decided to run this values education program starting with Grades 1 and 2 for this school year," DepEd-NCR Director Corazon Santiago shared.

"The next school year will see this program being implemented in Grades 3 and 4 and every school year in the next 2 higher levels. By 2009, the program will be in full swing from Grade School to High School," Directory Santiago added.

"The program is running smoothly and we are happy that this tie-up has been formed. This goes to show that when we all work together, we are able to help in building our nation. Jollibee's active participation in this program is significant in strengthening values formation in our education system," DepEd-National Capital Region (NCR) Director Corazon Santiago shared.

With the "Ang Batang Pinoy ay Jollibee Kid" values education program, there is now a vehicle in instilling positive Filipino values among children. As they imbibe the values of love of country, committed leadership, and national unity, and as we build a society founded on these values, buhay ay lalong sumasarap at lalong sumasaya.

BIFLEX 10TC LAUNCHED

Jardine Davies Inc and FMC Corp of the United States recently launched the latest soil termiticide in the Philippines. Biflex 10TC, a breakthrough product that offers superior termite control at lower dose was introduced to top pest control operators in Metro Manila. Also in attendance during the product launch were top Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) officials led by executive director engineer Jose Maria Perez and deputy director Dr. Dario Sabularse. Dr. Gil Magsino of FMC presented international studies on Biflex. Henry Dupoh of the Dupoh Research Institute also presented an independent research findings that confirm Biflex's longer residual efficacy. Shown in photo is FPA executive director engineer Jose Maria Perez addressing the pest control operators.

PAINTINGS OF UNDERPRIVILEGED KIDS EXHIBITED AT FOREST GRILL

An exhibit and sale of paintings by some underprivileged children under the care of E-such (Earnest Support for Underprivileged Children) Charity Association Inc, was recently hel at the Forest Grill Restaurant, 12 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati. The serendipitious meeting of Forest Grill Restaurant president, Jenny Munar, and E-such avid patron Joie Villarama, daughter of Bulacan's 2nd district Congressman Villarama, led to the realization of this worthy activity. In photo is Tessie Villarama showing the paintings she bought, with the E-such children.

ProductFILES

Doraemon now in Jack 'n Jill Chocolate Pretzels

MEET Doraemon, an extraordinary robot that will surely bring loads of adventurous fun to your kids' life. Doraemon was sent to a boy named Nobi Nobita who is so unlucky, weak and lazy that his descendants from the future had to send the family robot back in time to help prevent Nobita's mistakes and give them a better life. Doraemon is ready to take on any situation with his futuristic gadgets that come in handy. The lovable Doraemon is now on Jack 'n Jill Chocolate Pretzels boxes. Purchase all 6 back panels of the 70g Chocolate Pretzels box and 4 tokens from the 40g box to complete the game board and begin a time travel adventure with Doraemon and friends. Kids will surely love the many adventures they can have with this robotic cat who has endeared himself to many children worldwide. What's more, they can enjoy munching sweet and crunchy Jack 'n Jill Pretzels coated in rich chocolate. So get your kids ready for an exciting Jack 'n Jill Chocolate Pretzels adventure treat!

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Bits Clips

Photographers' Tiangge

A PHOTO rummage sale dubbed "Meet and Swap Day - Photographers Tiangge" will be held today, at the Veterans Federation of the Philippines compound (between the LRT Central Station and the old GSIS Bldg.), Arroceros, Ermita, Manila. The photo tiangge will give chance to photographers to sell their unused items while others can buy them at low prices. For details, contact FPPF at 843-5341/813-7420.

Cheese heads for new Tribal Store

AFTER rocking the New York subway-inspired Tribal Store in SM Manila, rapmetal band Cheese heads east to visit the newly opened reservoir-style Tribal Store at the 3rd floor of Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall today at 4 p.m. Famous for hits like "Mottaka", "Parusa", and "Enes" from their award-winning album "Pilipinas", Cheese will hang out and sign autographs inside the dungeon-style Tribal Store in SM Bacoor. For hip streetwear, visit Tribal Gear store in SM Megamall, SM Manila, SM North Edsa, SM Centerpoint, SM Southmall, SM Bacoor, and Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall.

Filipino Investors Society Diamond year

THE DIAMOND celebration of the Filipino Inventors Society with the theme "Imbensyong Filipino - Handog sa Mundo" will be highlighted by a musical concert and fellowship to be held at the Crossroads Auditorium at 7 p.m. tonight, at the corner of Scout Reyes and Mother Ignacia Sts. in Quezon City. Principal sponsor of the event is Splash Corp.

Christmas events at the Star Group of Malls

THE STAR Group of Malls will brighten up holiday shopping with exciting activities. On Dec. 6, Nooda Mix and Shake will have a mall tour dubbed "Bida sa Eskwela" at the Metropolis Star Alabang. On Dec. 13, join Starmall Edsa cor. Shaw Blvd. as they share the spirit of Christmas together with Nestle Ice Cream. Thirty children from Tahanang Walang Hagdan and White Cross Foundation will be treated to a special Christmas Carnival Show. The Grand Finals of the Search for a Kiddie Star will be on Dec. 14, 3 p.m. at the 3rd Level Foodstrip of Star Mall Edsa. At Metropolis Star Alabang on Dec. 14, watch the Grand Finals of Star Christmas Carol Chorale Competition. Join the coolest Christmas Acoustic Carol Contest, auditions is every Friday, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the 3rd Level Bridgeway. John Loyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo will be at the 4th level Tradehall of Metropolis Star Alabang on Dec. 21 at 4 p.m. On Dec. 13 and 21, get a chance to meet Santa Claus at Edsa Starmall at Santa's Corner located at the 3rd level Bridgeway from 2 to 6 p.m.

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Cheap Van Rental 9330311

L300/Vans 578-8917 (Roger)

MB HIACE URVAN 8276605

MB-100 7415897

STAREX 12 seater 7318549

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0357

1.5% CARLOAN 952-2510

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/o Taking Car 6567685

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

PETS

PCCI
19th FCI & 311th PCCI
ALL-BREEDS DOGSHOWS
RIVERBANKS CENTER
MARIKINA CITY
DECEMBER 6-7, 2003
UNDER INT'L JUDGES
MR. J RUEDA
(Uruguay)
MR. H PIZZORNO
(Uruguay)
STRICLY NO ADDENDUM
SHOW SCHEDULE
Saturday,
December 6, 2003
8:00 AM - Registration
8:30 AM - Judging
Ring 1&2 - Sporting Group
12:00 NN - Lunch Break
12:30 PM - Registration
1:00 PM - Judging
Ring 1 - Hound, Terrier & Toy Group
Ring 2 - Terrier, Toy & Hound Group
Sunday,
December 7, 2003
8:00 AM - Registration
8:30 AM - Judging
Ring 1 - Non-Sporting & Herding Group
Ring 2 - Herding & Non-Sporting Group
12:00 NN - Lunch Break
12:30 PM - Registration
1:00 PM - Judging
Ring 1 - Boxer, Rottweiler, G. Dane, Dobe, Husky
Ring 2 - S Husky, Dobe, G Dane, Boxer, Rottweiler
Best in Show
As per AO # 32 S2000 of the Department of Agriculture Exhibitors are required to bring the updated vaccination records of their dogs duly certified by a Veterinarian with an updated PRC license and PTR.
CORPORATE SPONSORS:
ADVANCE
SCIENCE DIET
Secondary Sponsors
PET I-CHIP ANIMAL ID
DIAMOND/NUTRA GOLD
TOP DOG Dogfood
Lacto-Pups & Lacto-plus
PFIZER Animal Health

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BILLIARDS

Sale/Rental/Servce 8014494

BUY/SELL

EDUCATION PLAN 8061574

EDUCATION PLANS 7137284

GARAGE SALE

GARAGE SALE
Dec. 4, 5 & 6 (Thursday to Saturday) #3 Ponce St., San Lorenzo Village; Makati Used & Unused Clothes, Used Shoes & Electronic Items.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT ELITE PIANO CENTER Almost New:TERMS-7213124

OFFICE EQUIPMENT

For Sale Lab & Off Eqpt, Furn in QC Call 925-3545

PETS

Golden Ret 18T 7210640

WANTED TO BUY

DEFECT TV/A'CON etc 7325865

BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX+OTHERS
DIAMONDS/JEWELRY
Repair / Polish Any watch
MANILA WATCH EXCHANGE
Hyatt • 804-0484 / 834-2886
Greenhills • 724-4374

PASIG

Lego Slide 4Th 620-4582

BUYING ROLEX
Other WATCHES, BEST PRICE
0917-8142309 • 7269687
7220433 • 4123543

MISCELLANEOUS

50 Live TURKEY Cheap 8232391

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

2 Machinist/ 2 Tool and Die Maker #86 Spain St., Better Living Subd., Paranaque 8232358/8234825

Fantastic income possible for an articulate and persistent sales rep, male, 35 years and above. If qualified, fax resume to 899-9799, Attention: Ms. Beverly Domingo

MALE/FEMALE

All around beautician txt 09173991968 ASAP

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

JOB HIRING 09167054572 AINA

MKTNG OFC STF 09208062187

WAITRESS text 09206309922 65A Malakas St VLuna Rd QC

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Attn Candidates, Lawyers,etc!!
1. Updated Omnibus Election Code of the Phil - P250/copy
2. Revised Comelec Rules of Procedure - P150/copy
Above books are available at:
•All Rex Book Stores
•Central Professional Books Quezon Avenue Quezon City
•No.33 Maamo St. Sikatuna Village Diliman Quezon City Telefax: 9229417; 4368166
•1161 Edsa, Balintawak QC Tel: 4157810; 09205085093 c/o Magdalena Mendoza

Everybody WELCOME to Int'l PSYCHIC CONGRESS to be held at MAX'S Res. Greenbelt Makati Time 10am - 5pm Interested Psychic or Psychic to be call Tel. 435-2396 EDWIN AGPAOA

NOTICE OF LOSS

Alabang Country Club Certificate No. A-637 Issued to Antonio R. Santamaria

PERSONAL

THANK YOU HOLY SPIRIT & MAMA MARY FOR YOUR HELP.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Globe Auto Load (Mla) 2552608

NEW 4 STOREY DORMITORY BLDG UNIVERSITY BELT AREA SAMPALOC MANILA 936-1426 / 937-2622

RETIRE 2YRS 09189051567

RTW Wholesaler 3738821

RTW/Blouses P28.00 7274934

Work By Phone, Earn Up 2 P30T/month! Female, 28&up! 892-7828

XMASLITES 3SETS/P100 Trees Repelites Etc. 532-3909

DIRECT SALE

JEWELRY NO CAPITAL CONSIGN TRMS MUST B EMPLYD 9842865

NOW OPEN!
GIFTS & SOUVENIRS SHOW 2003
OFFICIAL MEDIA PARTNER:
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
OFFICIAL BOOTH SUPPLIER:
CENTREX
EXHIBITION BUILDERS WORLDWIDE
OFFICIAL ONLINE MEDIA PARTNER:
WWW.YEHEY.COM
OFFICIAL CALL CENTER:
One Outsource Direct
POWERED BY:
J0N1X interactive
WGL
Uratex
VANTAGE
WAVE 89.1
Jam 88.3
96.3 RT
MAGIC 89.9
103.5

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ENJOY EXCITING ACTIVITIES
FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!
Arts and Crafts, Mini-concerts,
Chrismas Shows, Give-Aways
and many more!

organized by:
PROMENTORS INTERNATIONAL INC.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF:
S.O.S. (Save Our Souls) Children's Villages

December 4 to 7, 2003
10:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Megatrade Hall 2, 5th Level
Building B, SM Megamall
EDSA, Mandaluyong City
Metro Manila, Philippines

For details and inquiries, please contact:
PROMENTORS INTERNATIONAL INC.
Tel. No.: 816-1643; 817-0706
Mobile Nos.: (0918) 521-0488; (0917) 886-0912
Fax Nos.: 817-0709; 874-2088
Telefax: 655-3038
Email: giftsandsouvenirs@eudoramall.com

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

PDIC Extension Office, 6782 SSS Building, Ayala Avenue corner V.A. Rufino St., Makati City
Telephone No. 841-4000; Fax No. 841-4926; Website: www.pdic.gov.ph;
Email: bacsecretariat@pdic.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and installation of Fingerprint-based Time Recording System and the printing of the 2002 Annual Report.

The eligibility screening of bidders, evaluation of bids and awarding of contract shall be governed by Republic Act 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

PARTICULARS	UNITS/COPIES	APPROVED BUDGET
1. Fingerprint-Based Time Recording System	8	P1.375MM
2. Printing of 2002 Annual Report	2,000	P345,000.00
Source of Funding	2003 Corporate Operating Budget	
Pre-bid Conference	December 18, 2003, 2:30 PM at the 9th Flr., PDIC Extension Office, SSS Bldg., Ayala Avenue cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City	
Deadline for the submission of Eligibility Requirements and Proposals	December 29, 2003, 2:00 PM at the Bidding Room, 9th Floor, PDIC Extension Office, SSS Bldg., Ayala Ave. cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City	
Opening of Envelopes containing the Eligibility Requirements and Proposals	December 29, 2003, 2:30 PM at the Bidding Room, 9th Floor, PDIC Extension Office, SSS Bldg. Ayala Ave. cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City	

The Instructions to Bidders and the Terms of Reference shall be made available to interested bidders starting December 1, 2003, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the BAC Secretariat, 9th Floor, PDIC Extension Office, SSS Building, Ayala Avenue cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City after payment of a non-refundable amount of P300.00 for each item to be bid.

Criteria for eligibility check, examination and evaluation of bids and post-qualification shall be on non-discretionary pass/fail basis.

The eligibility screening of bidders, evaluation of bids and awarding of contract shall be governed by Republic Act 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

PDIC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereof, to waive any informality or minor defect, and to accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

PDIC shall in no case be held responsible or liable for any and all costs associated with the bidder's participation in the bidding process regardless of its results.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
(FOR GOODS, SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

(PDI--Nov. 29 & Dec. 6, 2003)

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

PDIC Extension Office, 6782 SSS Building
Ayala Avenue corner V.A. Rufino St., Makati City
Telephone No. 841-4000; Fax No. 841-4930; Website: www.pdic.gov.ph;
Email: bacsecretariat@pdic.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) invites printers to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the printing of 700 copies of PDIC Book with an approved budget of P187,600.00.

The Instructions to Bidders and Terms of Reference are available starting December 8, 2003, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the BAC Secretariat, 9th Floor, PDIC Extension Office, 6782 SSS Building, Ayala Avenue corner V.A. Rufino Street, Makati City, after payment of a non-refundable amount of P200.00.

Deadline for submission of bids is on December 29, 2003 at 2:00 PM at the same venue, afterwhich the opening of bids shall follow at 2:30 PM

The printer shall undertake the entire printing process within twenty one (21) working days from the date of submission of soft copy to the printer.

The eligibility screening bidders, evaluation of bids and awarding of contract shall be governed by Republic Act 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

A non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria shall be used in the eligibility check of eligibility documents.

PDIC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereof, to waive any informality or minor defect, and to accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

PDIC shall in no case be held responsible or liable for any and all costs associated with the bidder's participation in the bidding process regardless of its results.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
(FOR GOODS, SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS)

(PDI-Dec. 6 & 13, 2003)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION TO BID

Offered for Sale on an "as-is, where-is" basis are the assets formerly belonging to **Pioneer Glass Manufacturing Corporation (PGMC)** consisting of parcels of land located at Purok Sherman Hills, Brgy. Baviera, Sagay City, and at Sitio Lawis, Brgy. Alimango, Escalante City, both located in Negros Occidental.

The assets are offered on a **"per lot"**, as follows:

Lot No.	Description	Indicative Price
I	Land (23.28 hectares) located at Purok Sherman Hills, Brgy. Baviera, Sagay City, Negros Occidental	**P2,304,900.00**
II	Land (1.84 hectares) located at Sitio Lawis, Brgy. Alimango, Escalante City, Negros Occidental	**141,300.00**
TOTAL		**P2,446,200.00**

Offers will be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of the offerors on **15 December 2003**, at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties may request for the duly authenticated copies of the **Specific Rules on Offer for Sale (SROS), Offer for Sale Form (OSF)**, together with the **Asset Specific Catalogue (ASC)** for a nominal fee of P500.00 from the PMO Marketing Office.

For more information, please call Ms. Nadine M. Atilano of the PMO Marketing Office at 817-8762/892-2145.

(PDI-Dec. 6, 2003)

Republika ng Pilipinas
Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka
PAMBANSANG PANGASIWAAN NG PAGSASAKA AT PANGINGISDA
(National Agricultural and Fishery Council)
Diliman, Lungsod ng Quezon
Tel. No. 926-87-41 to 65 local 510

Tender No. 2003SEC416(B)(NFDM)-01
November 28, 2003

INVITATION TO BID

The National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC) for and in behalf of the National Dairy Authority/Department of Agriculture, hereby invites sealed bids for the sale of 1,192 metric tons (MT) of Non Fat Dry Milk (NFDM) for January 2004 arrival under the US Section 416 (b) Program.

Tender documents can be secured from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), NAFC, Apacible Hall, Department of Agriculture Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City starting on **December 2, 2003.**

Prospective bidder may start submitting their pre-qualification documents on **December 3, 2003.** The deadline for submission of the pre-qualification documents shall be on **December 11, 2003.** Pre-qualified bidders shall be notified anytime before the pre-bid conference. Only pre-qualified bidders shall be allowed to attend the pre-bid conference.

The pre-bid conference shall be held on **December 16, 2003** at 2:00 p.m. at the NAFC Conference Room.

Only fully completed sealed bids from pre-qualified bidders shall be submitted not later than 2:00 p.m. on **December 22, 2003.** Bids received after the scheduled time will not be accepted/entertained and will be returned unopened.

For details, please contact Ms. Paz Ventic or Ms. Peachy Agustin at tel. nos. 928-1966 or 929-8234.

Original Signed
MARIDEL TRINIDAD-DIZON
Executive Director

(PDI--Nov. 30 & Dec. 6, 2003)

WANTED

1–MECHANICAL ENGINEERING GRADUATE –Not more than 40 yrs. old
2–INSPECTOR –Male; College graduate, 38 years old below
3–MECHANIC

Apply at:

SANTRANS CORPORATION
Blk. 5 Lot 5, Mt. Hgts. Subd.,
Pangarap Village, Caloocan City
Tel. #939-32-39

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the Amended Articles of Incorporation of **TRI-O REALTY, INC.** shortening the term of its existence up to **June 30, 2003** thereby dissolving the said corporation on said date have been approved by its Board of Directors.

All persons having claims against said corporation are requested to present same at **374 Columbia St., East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.**

This announcement will serve as notice to all concerned of the legal dissolution of the aforesaid corporation.

(Sgd.) **MA. ADELA M. SANTOS**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI - Nov. 22, 29 & Dec. 6, 2003)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Tel: 911-6433/911-6001 Loc 6592; Tel/Fax: 912-5491
bac_secretariat_afpmp@hotmail.com

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **ACQUISITION OF A MINIMUM OF TWELVE (12) SURFACE ATTACK AIRCRAFT (SAA) AND ITS INTEGRATED LOGISTICS SUPPORT** (ILS) of the Philippine Air Force with an approved budget of **One Billion One Hundred Thirty Two Million Eight Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 1,132,800,000.00)** under the AFP Modernization Program.

Only bids from prime contractors; who may be the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM), authorized dealers by the OEM, Licensed Manufacturers by the OEM, or Third party contractors authorized by the user to sell; of the Surface Attack Aircraft shall be entertained.

Eligibility/Bid documents will be available for issuance starting **29 November 2003** during office hours between 8:00 o'clock a.m. to 5:00 o'clock p.m. (local time) until **11 December 2003** at 5:00 o'clock p.m. at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Materiel and Technology Development, J9, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of ***Sixty Thousand Pesos (Php 60,000.00)*** which is not refundable. The form of payment will be in cash or cashier's check in favor of the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective Bidder authorizing its representative to purchase the bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of the bid documents.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **11 December 2003** at 9:00 o'clock a.m. (local time) at Silid Panday Pira, 1st Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bidders are required to submit their queries in writing to the BAC Secretariat seven (7) days before the Pre-Bid Conference.

The deadline for submission of applications for eligibility requirements and bid envelopes is scheduled on **29 January 2004** at 9:00 o'clock a.m. (local time) and followed by the Opening of Bids at 9:00 o'clock a.m. on the same day at Silid Panday Pira.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) **ARISTON V DELOS REYES**
RADM AFP
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - Nov. 29 & Dec. 6, 2003)

NEW CEBU JIPPAN HOTEL
Is in need of

GENERAL MANAGER
RECEPTIONIST
CASHIER
SECRETARY
COOK
COOK HELPER
WAITRESS
BARTENDER
HOUSE KEEPER
LAUNDRY
ENGLISH TEACHERS

Preferably w/ experience. Applicants must be GOD fearing. Requirements: Application letter, resumé, 2x2 pic and other credentials. Pls. send your reply at: New Cebu Jippan Hotel, Looc Marbago Lapulapu City, tel. (032) 340-5995. APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED DEC. 8-13, 2003.

WANTED
SALESMAN
m/f, pref. reside in
South Loc.;
Age: 35 below
Tel. 824-2599
Look for Jovy,
College graduate.

Tired of working for your Boss' Dreams?
OWN YOUR OWN BUSINESS FOR P4,870
(1,600 DOWN)

In the next 3 weeks make over P20,000 in 60 days
Be earning over P50,000 per month

Attend 1 of our 4 Free Seminars this week
Robinsons Galleria Corp.Centre
5th Floor Suite 502

Tues. 7 pm / Wed 3 pm
Thurs 7 pm / Sat 3 pm

Eagle Team Int'l.
(American Company) 683-0837

PUBLIC NOTICE

The following Apartelles owned by the late Remigio C. Bernabe and surviving spouse Gloria Bernabe were already foreclosed and now considered acquired assets by the banks:

A. ALLIED BANK

1)	TCT # 165700	(RENESCENT APARTELLE located in St. Mary's St. corner New York St., Cubao, Quezon City)
2)	TCT # (297263)	PR-18140 (PEBBLES APARTELLE located in E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Brgy. Don Manuel, Quezon City)
3)	TCT # 96391	(WALNUT APARTELLE located in Isarog St. corner Dapitan St., Brgy. Sta. Teresita, Quezon City)
4)	TCT # 198474	(AMETHYST APARTELLE located in Gov. Forbes corner S.H. Loyola St., Sampaloc, Manila)
5)	TCT # 5667-R	(EAGLE APARTELLE located in Grey St. corner Aurora Blvd., Brgy. Ermitaño, San Juan, Metro Manila)

B. METROBANK

1)	TCT # RT-83492 (37455)	(LA MIRADA APARTELLE located in 20th Ave., Brgy. Mangga, Cubao, Quezon City)
2)	TCT # 96891	(ARIES APARTELLE located in Chicago St., Brgy. Pinagkaisahan, Cubao, Quezon City)

All interested persons, natural and juridical, are advised to file their claims to an ongoing estate proceedings filed and pending before branch 225, Regional Trial Court, Quezon City, with docket no. Sp. Proc. No. Q-01-44107.

Please be guided accordingly.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) **APOLINARIO C. BERNABE**
Designated Administrator
of the Estate of Remigio C. Bernabe

(PDI - Dec. 6, 2003)

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AUCTION

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IN OVER 800 LOTS INCLUDING: -

TRUCK / TRUCKCRANES: LORAIN 50 Tons Capacity Truckcrane; MACK Tractor Head W/ 12 Tons Capacity Boom; FORD 800 Commander w/ 30 Tons Capacity Boom; HENDRICKSON Truck w/.10 Tons Capacity SIMON STINGER Boom; Overhead Crane
MOTOR VEHICLES: HONDA ACCORD TRC-791; AUV w/ Diesel Engine
ELECTRICALS: Square D Safety Switches; DONG HWA Ballast;, Assorted UPS, Panel Boards; Electrode Stabilizing Oven; Welding Rods; ITT MARLOW Self Priming Pumps; PACO Pumps; SVANEJO Pumps; MOVICHROM Submersible Pumps; ELECTRA Centrifugal Pumps; China Motor
HAND & POWER TOOLS: Used and Unused Power Tools; Angle Grinder, Metric Hand Socket Wrench Sets; MAKITA Disc Grinder & Drill Combination; SATO Hydraulic Jack; Superworks Finishing Sander; Superworks Compound Mitre Saw; Grass Trimmer; Hedge Trimmer; Pressure Washer; etc.
AIRCONDITIONING UNITS: LIEBERT Intelecool 2 5 - Tonner Capacity Airconditioning Units (Unused); MARVAIR COMPAC 3 5- Tonner Capacity Airconditioning Units (Unused); FEEDERS Split Type Airconditioning Units, etc.
OFFICE FURNITURES & EQUIPMENT: Lateral Filing Cabinets; Pedestal Drawers; Wooden Desks; Asstd. Office Chairs; Plotters; Shredders; Asstd. Printers; Asstd. Computer Equipment, etc.
HOUSEHOLD GOODS: Refrigerators; Television Sets; Microwave Oven and Toasters; Vacuum Cleaners; Cooking Utensils; Food Warmer; Dish Washer;
FAST FOOD RESTAURANT EQUIPMENT: Stainless Steel Food Preparation Table; Stainless Meat Freezers; etc.
MISCELLANEOUS: GUZZLEM Power Vacuum System; Air Compressors; Mixer/Shaker; Asstd. Diesel Engines; Semi-Lowbed Trailers; BYRON Jack Pumps; Electrical Winches; Building Structures and Trusses; Steel Pipes; Tower Light; I-Beam; H-Beam; Stainless Scrap; Roller Conveyors

AT: HENRY BUTCHER AUCTION CENTER
C/O HILON COMPOUND - BO. MAYAPA, CANLUBANG, LAGUNA
AUCTION DATE: TUESDAY 9TH DECEMBER 2003 10:30AM SHARP
VIEWING DATE: MONDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2003
9:00AM - 5:00PM AND MORNING OF SALE DAY
REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT: PHP20,000 (UPON REGISTRATION)

HENRY BUTCHER
GaIndustry [illegible]

HENRY BUTCHER INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINES INC.
Rm. [illegible] Bldg., [illegible] Edsa, Pasay City, Philippines
Tel No.: +(63 2) [illegible] Fax No.: +(63-2) [illegible]
E-mail: [illegible]@henrybutcher.com
Website: www.henrybutcher.com/www.[illegible].com

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-6401 • (632) 920-6446
E-mail: sssemail@info.com.ph • Web site http://www.sss.gov.ph

NOTICE

Please get in touch with the Members Assistance Center, Social Security System (SSS), East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or at any SSS office nearest your place of residence and file your death benefit claim within 90 days upon publication, if you are:

	NAME OF BENEFICIARIES	LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	NAME OF SSS MEMBER	DATE OF DEMISE
1)	Carmen Torcelino	1252 Peñafrancia St., Paco, Manila	Abelardo Abulencia SS # 03-3741673-6	September 21, 2003
2)	Victoria Alejo	522-C Makisig St., Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Mla.	Lazaro Alejo SS # 03-3459467-7	September 22, 2002
3)	Teresita Reyes Rebecca Almenario	Unknown	Edilberto Almenario SS # 03-3656322-4 03-5343410-3	September 16, 2003
4)	Rodrigo Arcillas, Jr.	Unknown	Soledad G. Arcillas SS # 06-1337411-0	May 2, 2003
5)	Michael Josef	3 Molave St., Marikina Hts., Marikina City	Generoso Arrieta SS # 03-1510473-0	October 5, 2003
6)	Segundina C. Atis	Unknown	Edelberto D. Atis SS # 06-0003113-6	December 9, 2002
7)	Mariquita and Michelle Badillo	176 Mabuhay St., Tondo, Manila	Abelardo R. Badillo SS # 03-4129916-9	April 23, 2003
8)	Erlinda Lumacad	Unknown	Gregorio D. Bancal, Jr. SS # 03-5520769-7	June 6, 2003
9)	Medina Cruz	Malanday, San Mateo, Rizal	Vivencio R. Cruz SS # 03-4217241-8	August 27, 2003
10)	Patricia I. Dela Cruz	9 Quezon St., Hagonoy, Taguig	Rafael C. Dela Cruz SS # 03-2392612-0	August 25, 2003
11)	Irene R. Candava	Pasay City	Antonio P. Donis, Jr. SS # 03-2929344-6	May 31, 2003
12)	Gregorio Encina	Unknown	Candido T. Encina SS # 06-0290354-7	July 15, 2003
13)	Evangelino Fornis	Ilang-Ilang St., De Guzman Vill, Sasa, Davao	Evangelina M. Fornis SS # 09-2442431-9	April 4, 2003
14)	Carmen Necesario	Manila	Rafael R. Jimenez SS # 07-1643399-0	January 20, 2003
15)	Roger "Marteng" Karding	Poblacion, Talayan, Maguindanao	Sonny Karding SS # 33-3500797-9	November 10, 2001
16)	Rubi B. Lago	Umalag, Misamis Oriental	Petra B. Lago SS # 08-0223563-2	September 18, 2003
17)	Santos Naba	Sitio Consipolo, Caridad, Baybay, Leyte	Antonio Loreto SS # 02-0473222-6	July 18, 1995
18)	Maria Manlapaz	488 San Miguel St., Looc, Cardona, Rizal	Romeo Manlapaz SS # 03-7324344-2	July 8, 2003
19)	Artely Daradar Paculdo	Unknown	Ricardo Paculdo SS # 03-1347292-7	January 1, 2003
20)	Lilia V. Palaganas	2464 Amalista, San Andres Subd., Manila	Marciano B. Palaganas SS # 03-1859270-5	September 22, 2003
21)	Susan Gardionco Peros, Erlyn Peros Kenneth Ryan Peros James Carl Peros	Phase I Package 11 Blk 11 Lot 3 Bagong Silang, Caloocan City	Carlito Peros SS # 03-6741908-8	August 4, 2002
22)	Nieves Hila	Sorsogon, Sorsogon	Victor Ralleca SS # 01-0297607-4	July 31, 2003
23)	Redentor Recto	Unknown	Demetrio V. Recto SS # 03-6339580-5	May 20, 2003
24)	Arsenia A. Roveros Airene Nica A. Roveros	425 Pulog St. cor. Boni Ave., Mandaluyong City	Ireneo Roveros SS # 03-1096258-2	June 18, 2003
25)	Jesus G. Solas	Palawan	Ramelito P. Solas SS # 06-1870645-3	March 8, 2003
26)	Florencita Paino Tadios	Unknown	Macario T. Tadios SS # 02-0474147-9	August 13, 2003
27)	Domingo Tam	Port Road, Ozamis City	Martha M. Tam SS # 08-0672408-9	March 30, 2000
28)	Ruvelyn Umali Jennelyn Umali	Brgy. Aya, San Jose, Batangas Unknown	Richard R. Umali SS # 33-1971236-1	September 22, 2003
29)	Antonio Dionson Villones	Mindanao	Virginia Bonifacio Villones SS # 02-0864127-4	September 29, 2003
30)	Segundina Bobier Pedro Vitaliano, Sr.	Unknown	Pedro Vitaliano, Jr. SS # 05-0325285-0	July 23, 2003
31)	Wilhelmina P. Yabut Martin Yabut Faustina Tandag Yabut	Unknown	Felipe Y. Yabut SS # 03-5277238-7	August 19, 2003

– Nothing follows –

(PDI - Dec. 6, 2003)

Office of the President
Republic of the Philippines
CLARK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Clark Special Economic Zone, Pampanga

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Clark Development Corporation (CDC) invites interested investors for the:

"PRIVATIZATION OF THE FORMER MIMOSA RESORT ESTATE"

The privatization project intends to seek investors and/or locators who will operate the existing facilities; and improvements thereof, of the multi-million former Mimosa Resort Estate and further develop it into a prime tourist and recreational destinaton in Central Luzon for a period of 25 years.

Interested parties may submit Letter of Intent (LOI) and eligibility not later than **December 29, 2003** (9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) at the Office of Vice President for Finance, Bldg. 2121 E. Quirino Ave., CSEZ, Pampanga. Proponents are required to submit the LOI, along with the following requirements:

a) Three (3) years audited financial statements (2000, 2001 & 2002)
b) List of major projects funded and/or operated (with full description); and
c) Bank certification as to proponent's capability to fund US$50 million project.

Terms of Reference (TOR) will be issued to the prospective bidder upon submission of the LOI and required documents, and payment of a non-refundable fee of TWENTY THOUSAND PESOS (P20,000.00). Issuance of the TOR shall commence on December 08 to 20, 2003 (9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.).

Only those who are qualified for the said project shall be invited and notified for the schedule of pre-bid and bidding conferences.

CDC reserves the right to reject any or all applications or bids without offering any reason, waive any formality, informality and/or defect and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government, nor does CDC guarantee that an award will be made.

A pre-bid conference may be held upon request of the proponent. Submission and opening of offers/bids shall be on January 15, 2004.

All inquiries and letters shall be addressed to:

MIMOSA PRIVATIZATION COMMITTEE
c/o DIR. BENIGNO N. RICAFORT
Clark Development Corporation
Bldg. 2121, E. Quirino Avenue,
Clark Field, Pampanga

(PDI - Dec. 6 & 7, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
U.N. Avenue, Paco, Manila

INVITATION TO REGISTER AND TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites Contractors classified by CIAP and registered with PCAB and with technical knowhow in Waterproofing using Polyurethane Spray Foam Technology Application or Contractors with Joint Venture Agreement to Applicators who Specialized in Waterproofing using Polyurethane Spray Foam Technology to register and apply for eligibility and, if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the hereunder project:

NAME OF PROJECT AND LOCATION	APPROVED BUDGET	CONTRACTOR'S CLASSIFICATION	CONTRACT DURATION
Repair of MFC Warehouse #4 MFC Compound, Valenzuela City	P4,000,000.00	At least Medium A	120 Calendar Days

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

1.	Issuance of Application Forms and List of Registration Requirements	December 8-19, 2003 (From 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)
2.	Deadline for Submission of Application and Registration Requirements	Not later than 4:00 p.m. December 30, 2003
3.	Issuance of Certificate of Registration And Application/Requirements for Eligibility and to Bid Including Bid Documents	On or before January 12, 2004 (From 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)
4.	Pre-Bidding Conference	January 21, 2004 (10:00 a.m.)
5.	Submission and Opening of Bids	February 02, 2004 (10:00 a.m.)

Interested contractors shall submit their Eligibility Statements including Price Proposals in the prescribed forms to the Chairman, Regional Bid and Award Committee (RBAC), National Food Authority, U.N. Ave., Paco, Manila.

Application form and list of requirements for registration may be secured at the NFA-RBAC Secretariat upon presentation of Letter of Intent and payment of a non-refundable registration fee of Php 2,000.00. Only those issued with Certificates of Official Registration may apply for eligibility and to bid. Application form and requirements for eligibility and to bid (Bid documents and plans) shall be issued only upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 3,000.00.

All particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of existing laws and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defect or informality, and to accept only such bids or to award to any contractor whose bid is considered most advantageous to the National Food Authority.

(Sgd.) ATTY. KASHIDES TACO
Asst. Regional Director & RBAC Chairman

(PDI – December 6 & 14, 2003)

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED COOPERATIVE BANK OF LANAO DEL SUR, INC.

1. Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 3591, as amended, the prescriptive date (last day) for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Cooperative Bank of Lanao Del Sur, Inc. is on **December 12, 2003**. After **December 12, 2003**, PDIC as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

2. From **December 09 to 12, 2003**, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) thru its duly authorized representatives shall resume receiving and servicing claims for insured deposits maintained with the closed Cooperative Bank of Lanao Del Sur, Inc.

3. Depositors are requested to proceed directly at the premises of the closed Prime Savings Bank – Cagayan De Oro Branch (located at Door No. 4 & 5, Enterprise Center Bldg., Water Side Living Complex, Julio Pacana Street, Cagayan De Oro City), payoff site for Cooperative Bank of Lanao Del Sur, Inc. to file claims for insured deposits.

   PDIC representatives are stationed at the aforesaid payoff site from **December 09** to **12, 2003** to accept claims and entertain queries of depositors during office hours, Monday to Friday.

4. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to the PDIC representatives when filing their claims:

   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook and/or Certificate of Time Deposits.
   b. At least two (2) valid identification documents (ID) bearing the depositor's signature.
   c. Photocopy of Birth Certificate duly authenticated by Local Civil Registrar.

   Other documents may be required by the PDIC representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

(PDI–Dec. 5 & 6, 2003)

National Power Corporation
December 4, 2003

INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS/LETTER OF INTENT FOR THE RENTAL/LEASE OF GENERATING SETS

The National Power Corporation (NPC) in coordination with the Department of Energy (DOE) is in urgent need of proposals for the rental/lease of modular type diesel generating sets for Panay (10 MW continuous power) Mindoro (25 MW continuous power) and Palawan (15 MW continuous power) for a minimum period of one (1) year. The generator sets must be commissioned on or before **March 7, 2004** and connected to the existing 69KV Transmission Line.

Interested contractors must submit their proposals/Letter of Intent in sealed envelopes to the National Power Corporation with the following:

Company Profile
Number and capacity of gensets available for rent/lease
Technical specifications of the generating sets
Certificate of availability of the generating sets
Price proposal

Terms of Reference (TOR) will be issued on **December 8, 2003.**

Deadline for submission of proposal/Letter of Intent is on December 11, 2003. Opening of proposals will be on **December 12, 2003**, 9:30 a.m. Moriones Function Room, NPC, Diliman, Quezon City.

For other details, please contact the Manager, Design and Development Department, National Power Corporation, Diliman, Quezon City at Tel. Nos. 925-4376/921-3541 Local 5205.

(Sgd.) **SILVANO C. ZANORIA**
SVP-ME & TMS and Chairman
Contracts Awards Committee

(PDI - Dec. 6 & 7, 2003)

PNOC
The Energy Company

PNOC EXPLORATION CORPORATION
Building I, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone Nos. 893-6001 to 47 local 2101-2104
Direct Line: 840-2024/Fax No.: (632) 840-1459

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC) invites interested contractors to apply for pre-qualification and submit sealed bids for the **SECURITY SERVICES of PNOC EC Energy Supply Base (BX03-673 R1).** PNOC EC Energy Supply Base is located at Barangay Mainaga, Mabini, Batangas.

The approved budget for this contract is Php7,814,725.71. The contract duration is two (2) years.

Pre-Qualification and Bid Documents shall be available for issuance at the above address from the Contracts Assistant (c/o Mr. Carlos L. Mejias or Mr. George N. Alejandro) starting **December 6, 2003** upon payment of non-refundable fee of PESOS: One Thousand Two Hundred (Php1,200.00).

All pre-qualification requirements must be submitted to the Contracts Assistant not later than **4:00 P.M.** of **December 29, 2003** at the above address. Only contractors who can submit all the pre-qualification requirements before the set deadline shall be allowed to participate in the bidding.

The bidding shall utilize a two (2) sealed envelope system. The first envelope shall contain the Technical Bid and the second envelope shall contain the Financial Bid. The Technical and Financial Bids shall be submitted in two (2) sets each to the Contracts Assistant not later than **3:00 P.M.** of **January 21, 2004** at the PNOC EC Conference Room located at the above address and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **January 9, 2004, 10:00 A.M.** at the PNOC EC Conference Room, Energy Supply Base, Barangay Mainaga, Mabini, Batangas.

PNOC EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC EC.

This publication is also posted in our website at: www.pnoc-ec.com.ph and in the DBM website at www.procurementservice.net.

(Sgd.) Ricardo S. Basallo, Jr.
Chairman
Contracts Award Committee

(PDI–December 6, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Ilocos Sur
VIGAN CITY

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION AND TO BID

1 The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Vigan City, Republic of the Philippines, has received a grant from Agencia Española de Cooperacion Internacional (AECI) towards the cost of the Raois-Mira Hills Parallel Transmission Line Project under the Integrated Water Supply and Management System for Vigan City and intends to apply the proceeds of this grant to eligible payment under the contract, for which the Invitation for Prequalification and to Bid is issued.

2. The City of Vigan hereinafter referred to as the "Owner" intends to prequalify contractors for the construction of:

Name of Project	Proposed Additional Water Supply System for the Raois-Mira Hills Parallel Transmission Line Project
Location	City of Vigan, Ilocos Sur
Contract Duration	180 Calendar Days
Scope of Work	Construction of a proposed 635-cum concrete ground reservoir and rehabilitation of the existing 760-cum concrete ground reservoir at Mira Hills (complete with civil works including piping system, appurtenances and all necessary works).
Approved Budget for Contract	P6.33 M

3. Prequalification is open to firms and voluntarily joint ventures.

Schedule of application for prequalification and bidding as follows.

a.	Submission of Letter of Intent and Issuance of Prequalification Documents	From Dec. 08-12, 2003 upon payment of non-refundable amount of P100.00
b.	Submission of Duly Accomplished Prequalification Documents	Not later than 5:00 p.m. Dec. 19, 2003
c.	Issuance of Plans/Bid Documents to Prequalified Bidders	Jan. 05-09, 2004 upon payment of non-refundable amount of P10,000.00
d.	Site Visit/Bid Conference	Site Visit 10:00 a.m./Pre Bid Conference 2:00 pm on January 15, 2004
e.	Submission/Opening of Bids	Not later than 10:00 a.m. Jan. 29, 2004 at Bidding Room, Bids and Awards Committee, Vigan City

For issuance of Bidders Prequalification Form and Plans/Bid Documents, you may contact:

The City Planning and Development Officer
City Hall, Vigan City
Tel. No. (077) 722-8772 Local 105

The City of Vigan reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive defects or formality therein, to accept bids considered responsive and most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO P. RANCHES, JR.
City Vice Mayor
Acting Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Nov. 29 & Dec. 6, 2003)

ATTENTION

TO ALL THAILAND BIYAHERA

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OBITUARIES

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There is no death, in nature nothing dies.
From among the sad remnants of decay
some forms of life arise. — Anonymous

Ret. Judge Eliseo Peñaflor y Aquino

1928-2003

Peacefully joined his Creator on December 3, 2003.

His remains lie in state at # 21 Burgos St., Dinalupihan, Bataan.

Interment will be on Sunday, December 7, 2003 at the Dinalupihan New Municipal Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at St. John the Baptist Church.

In Loving Memory on the
20th Death Anniversary of my Dear Daddy

Judge FELIPE TICZON ELEOSIDA

of San Pablo City and Kidapawan City

Masses will be offered in the following churches:

San Pablo Cathedral *San Pablo City*	6:00 AM
Our Lady Mediatrix *Kidapawan City*	5:45 AM
Immaculate Conception *Vista Verde, Cainta*	6:00 AM
Sta. Isabel de Rosis *Italy*	6:00 AM
St. Genevieve *Panorama City, USA*	6:00 AM

DEATH NOTICES

Mrs. CELEDONIA B. BELTRAN

Died in the Grace of our Lord on December 1, 2003.

Her remains lie in state at their residence at San Mateo Rizal and will be brought to her hometown in Bacacay, Albay tomorrow. Interment is on December 9, 2003 at Bacacay Cemetery. Relatives are enjoined to pray for her soul.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate

❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments

"I am the Resurrection and the Life, whoever believes in Me, though he dies, shall live." John 11:25

In Loving Memory of

Antonio C. Delgado

Masses will be offered tomorrow, Sunday
on the 11th Anniversary of his death,
December 7, 2003

St. Jerome Church/Sta. Susana Parish Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa	6:30 am
Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Redemptorist Church) Baclaran, Parañaque City	6:45 am
Minor Basilica San Lorenzo Ruiz Binondo, Manila	7:00 am
Our Lady of Peace & Good Voyage Antipolo, Rizal	8:00 am
Sto. Niño de Tondo Parish Tondo, Manila	9:00 am
Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene Plaza Miranda, Quiapo, Manila	10:00 am
Santuario de San Antonio Forbes Park, Makati City	10:30 am
Basilica of the Immaculate Conception Intramuros, Manila	11:30 am
Makati Medical Center Chapel Dela Rosa Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City	12:00 noon
Sto. Niño de Paz Chapel Greenbelt Park, Makati City	3:00 pm
St. James the Great Cuenca, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	4:30 pm
National Shrine of the Sacred Heart Dao Street, San Antonio Village, Makati City	5:00 pm
St. John Bosco Parish Arnaiz Street, Makati City	5:45 pm

Our dearly beloved "MAMA"

EMILIA MARTIN COCAL

Born: October 15, 1925
Died: December 04, 2003

Peacefully joined her Creator at the age of 78.

Her beloved husband **Ludovico R. Cocal**; children **Florante & Virginia Cocal, Celia-Laura Cocal Stanisavich, Elescilda Cocal Royola, Jose & Susan Mendiola, Lerdo Cocal,** and **Averill & Amour-Mae Amor**; grandchildren **Celyne, Jonathan, Joanah-Onelia, Richmund, Lloyd Eric, Fatima Angelica, Claudette Eden, Jasmine-Stephanie, Samuel Benson, Ain-Anique, Ave-Adena, Averill Amery** & **Ariadne-Amica**; great grandchildren; sisters **Elisa Morales** & **Maxcel Macadamia**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels (Chapel "O"), Guadalupe, Makati City and will be flown to Midsayap, Cotabato on Sunday morning, December 07, 2003.

Interment will be on Wednesday, December 10, 2003 in the family farm at Baguer, Libungan, Cotabato.

"I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing."
— **Genesis 12:2**

Anita Ferrer Manabat

of Seattle, Washington

Died in the grace of our Lord on December 4, 2003 at the age of 72.

Her remains lie in state in Chapel #2 at St. Alphonsus de Liguori Parish Magallanes Village, Makati City and will be brought to Cabanatuan City at #10 De Guzman Subdivision, Bantug Norte on December 7, 2003.

Interment will be on December 10, 2003 at 2:00 p.m.

We remember...

NICOLAS LAYGO CUENCA
and
CRISTINA MAGSAYSAY CUENCA

whose birth anniversaries fall on December 6 and 15 respectively.

Masses will be offered for the repose of their souls at the

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish,
N. Garcia St. cor. Kalayaan Ave., Makati

on Dec. 6, 12:15 and 6:30 pm Masses
Dec. 15, 12:15 and 6:30 pm Masses.

The family they left behind ask their friends and relatives to join them in loving prayer for the repose of their souls.

In Loving Memory
On the 1st Death Anniversary
Of

LUZVIMINDA "Minda" Z. FRANCISCO

(October 28, 1940 - December 06, 2002)

Her loving husband, Tony; Children, Ester & Gene de Guzman, Grace & Roy Torres, Maritoni & John Gonzalez, Tony, Jr. & Liza Francisco, Manny & Ann Francisco, Leo Francisco; Grandchildren, Gabriel & Gianne de Guzman, Wyll, Riezl & Ralph Torres, Kevin, Kaye, Karl & Kristone Gonzalez, Kate & Cheenie Francisco, Matt, Miggs & Marga Francisco.

Together with their families & friends, request the pious readers to offer prayers for her.

Holy Masses will be offered for the eternal repose of her soul today, December 06, 2003 at the following churches:

San Antonio de Padua Parish
Malabon City, 6:00 pm

San Bartolome Parish
Malabon City, 6:00 am & 5:30 pm

Immaculate Concepcion Parish
Malabon City, 6:00 am & 6:00 pm

Sto. Rosario Parish
Malabon City, 6:00 am & 6:00 pm

San Jose de Navotas
Navotas MM, 6:00 am & 6:00 pm

Christ the King Parish
Green Meadows, 6:00 pm

Mary the Queen Parish
Greenhills, 6:00 am

Santuario de San Jose
Greenhills, 6:00 pm

Our Lady of Lourdes
Tagaytay City, 6:00 am & 5:30 pm

Nuestra Señora de Candelaria
Silang Cavite, 6:00 am

"You will show me the path to life, abounding joy in your presence, the delight at your right hand Forever..." *Psalm 16:11*

ANTONINO GERALDEZ-PATAG

Peacefully joined his Creator on December 04, 2003 at the age of 39.

Beloved son to **Napoleon** and **Lourdes** (†); brother to **Cherie** and spouse **Chris, Gabby** and spouse **Dindin, Riqui**; uncle to **Micah Joy, Joshua Miguel** (†), **Francis Gerard** and **Gabriela Francin**, mentor and a friend to many. Relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel D, La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, 09 December 2003 at Himlayang Pilipino after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Christian C. Reyes

June 29, 1983 - November 20, 2003

Express our heartfelt gratitude to those who condoled with us, offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers, cards and messages of sympathy, gave donations, visited and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and memorial services, and who in countless ways helped and comforted us during our moments of bereavement. Please continue to pray for his eternal repose in heaven.

"God be with you on your journey home.
We will miss you dearly . . . . our Angel"

"Let the words of my mouth meet your Favor, keep the thoughts of my heart before you, Lord, my rock, my redeemer...

Psalm 21:15

SCIENCE/HEALTH

E-mail: pr_science_health@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang
Assistant Editor Stella O. Gonzales

Antioxidants curb eye disease progression

By Tessa R. Salazar

IMAGINE yourself as a recently retired employee about to start enjoying your retirement pension. But you wake up one day seeing a black patch in the center of your vision. You can't read or watch television because of that patch. You can't even recognize people because the patch covers their faces—only their bodies are recognizable.

That black patch is the unmistakable symptom of the advanced stage of a disease called Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD). The bad news is that at that stage, it is irreversible. Not even the most advanced laser treatment or eye surgery can help restore your vision.

About five to 10 percent of all people who reach 60 years will suffer from AMD.

The disease breaks down the macula, the light-sensitive part of the retina responsible for the sharp, direct vision needed to read or drive. Macular degeneration can produce slow or sudden painless loss of vision.

Symptoms

An AMD sufferer usually experiences a gradual deterioration of his vision, which would usually be attributed to old age. The disease kicks into the advance stage with alarming abruptness, in some cases in a span of just a few hours.

Experts say that if straight lines look wavy to you, or your vision seems fuzzy, or there are shadowy areas in your central vision, you may be experiencing early signs of AMD.

Eye doctor Gerard Chuah, consultant at the Mount Elizabeth Center in Singapore, recently discussed AMD in the Philippines with fellow ophthalmologists and the public.

He said eye specialists in Asia were seeing more cases of AMD in the region in the last five years.

ILLUSTRATION: GILBERT DAROY

Lifestyle is culprit

Chuah said changes in diet and lifestyle could be among the culprits that trigger AMD. People are now eating less fruits and vegetables and more saturated fats and proteins. Then they combine this with smoking.

This, he said, could adversely affect the body's antioxidant levels and at the same time bring stress levels up to an unmanageable point.

AMD is also genetically linked. It occurs more frequently in certain families, in lighter colored races, and among people with blue irises or generally with lighter colored eyes.

Other factors that place a person at a higher risk of AMD are high blood pressure, farsightedness and obesity.

More females tend to get the disease.

No treatment

At this time, there is no treatment for AMD.

"All laser treatments only stabilize vision. The treatment is not for restoring vision but to preserve what is left. Often, the success rate for stabilizing vision is probably 50 to 60 percent. The rest continue to lose their vision," Chuah said.

In 1992, Bausch and Lomb, in cooperation with the National Eye Institute, launched a comprehensive study to prove the importance of antioxidants and zinc in helping AMD patients preserve their vision.

The nearly 10-year study utilized high-dose supplementations of Vitamins C, E, A (through beta carotene) and zinc on AMD patients.

The study found that antioxidants and zinc in correct proportions decreased the incidence of progression to advanced AMD.

Chuah said the study results were significant because they showed that AMD progression could be reduced by 25 percent.

It is recommended that persons above 40 should have an eye exam every two to three years. Those above 50 should have an eye exam every year.

Those over 55 should have a dilated eye examination to determine their risk of developing advanced AMD.

Math in RP: innovative teaching

(Second of three parts)

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

LAST week we looked at indigenous math research in the Philippines as presented before a recent conference in Benguet State University spearheaded by the Philippine Council of Mathematics Teacher Educators. Now we focus on math teaching.

- "Motivational Strategies in Teaching Math: Are the 'Tricks' Working for the Learners' Good?" (Soledad Ulep, UP Nismed). Using data from the international Learner's Perspective Study, Dr. Ulep examined the motivational strategies used by a competent second-year urban public high school teacher, focusing on student learning of concepts and problems, descriptions of good lessons and teachers, class interaction, beliefs about math and attitude toward such strategies.
- "Reducing Abstract Math Concepts to a Concrete Level" (Herminia Torres and Marialita Esberto, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas). The researchers conducted a survey asking college math teachers to identify abstract concepts difficult to concretize, then they developed a framework to produce effective strategies in doing so, especially for students not majoring in the sciences.

Motivating students

- "Teaching Difficulties of College Math Instructors" (Maria Alva Aberin, Ateneo de Manila University). From interviews, Dr. Aberin discovered that teaching difficulties could be classified into general areas: motivating students, dealing with differences and nonmastery of prerequisite skills, and evaluation. She focused on the area of motivation, which teachers found the most difficult.
- "Teachers' Questions: Do They Complement Teaching Strategies?" (May Japson, National Institute for Mathematics and Science Development, Nismed, UP Diliman). Dr. Japson focused on comparing teaching strategies employed by high school mathematics III and IV teachers, who were either users or nonusers of the Teacher's Resource Material. The material had daily lesson plans with varied strategies like exposition, discussion, problem solving, practical work, investigations and enrichment activities such as cooperative learning, assessment and the art of questioning.
- "Problem Strategies of Teachers and Their Implications for Our Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) Results" (Dolores Pattuinan, Mindanao State University). Teachers from the cities of Iligan and Marawi were asked to formulate, and afterward solve, each other's math problems. The problems posed were mostly routine, low-level arithmetic, geometric or algebraic problems (no statistics or trigonometry). Unsurprisingly, most problems were influenced by books the teachers were using.

During problem solving, most teachers tried to set up equations, and patterns of errors could be discerned from them. No other problem-solving strategies were used. No wonder our students did badly in the TIMSS. They were not used to the questions posed, which necessitated high-order thinking skills and real-life applications.

Low performing schools

- "Investigating Elementary Math Teachers' Beliefs and Practices in High and Low Performing Schools in Metro Manila" (Rosemarievic Villena-Diaz, Philippine Normal University). Teachers' beliefs focused on the nature of math, teaching and learning, where school performance categories were based on their rank in the math component of the National Elementary Achievement Test.
- "Comparing the Conceptual and Technique-Oriented Approaches in Teaching Differential Calculus" (Carmelita Ragasa, University of the East). Would there be a significant difference in student performance and attitude if students were exposed to two different methods in calculus? Dr. Ragasa discovered that "learning occurred significantly in the conceptual approach of teaching derivatives and their applications. Learning also occurred significantly using the technique-oriented approach." In terms of achievement or attitude, no significant differences were found.
- "Enhancement of Students' Problem-Solving Performance through Math Symbolism" (Lourdes Fuscablo and Charita Luna, Mindanao Polytechnic State College). The two researchers ensured that symbolism was taught from the beginning and throughout an algebra course and then examined its effects. They discovered that symbolism powerfully influenced student performance, especially in translation of word problems into equations.

The 'tablea' treatment

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

BACK in September, I wrote about various studies which showed that dark chocolate, green tea and red wine were good for people if taken in moderation because they have antioxidants that keep cells from aging. Antioxidants also protect the heart, fight bad cholesterol and even help prevent cancers.

A recent press release from the Australian government's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization emphasizes the abundance of antioxidants in citrus fruits. Released on Dec. 3, the study is actually based on over 40 international studies on the health benefits of citrus. It shows that eating an orange a day could be enough to dramatically decrease one's risk for strokes (up to 19 percent) or certain cancers (up to 40-50 percent for mouth, larynx and stomach cancers). The study also touches on how eating an orange could benefit those with heart problems, diabetes and obesity.

Dec. 3 is apparently a good day to release studies about preventing cancer. The current issue of the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry contains a paper titled "Cocoa Has More Phenolic Phytochemicals and a Higher Antioxidant Capacity than Teas and Red Wine." It was written by researchers at Cornell University's Department of Food Science and Technology and at South Korea's Seoul National University.

Cocoa as antioxidant

While scientists had apparently known for a while that cocoa has antioxidant properties, no one had ever looked at just how effective these antioxidants were in comparison to other known antioxidant-rich foods and beverages.

Funded in part by the BioGreen 21 Program under the Rural Development Administration of South Korea, co-authors Chang Yong-lee, Hyong Joo-lee and their colleagues compared the amount of antioxidants, phenolic acids and flavonoids found in equal servings of red wine, green tea, black tea and hot chocolate.

A quick reminder: phenolic acids and flavonoids fall under the category phytochemicals, naturally occurring compounds that fight off disease. They are antibacterial, antiviral, antiinflammatory, antiallergic and antithrombotic compounds.

Lab test

For the test, the researchers took a glass of California Merlot (I wasn't able to find out the label but I know they used 140 ml of it, roughly one-third of a can of soda), a sachet of green tea, a glass of black tea and a cup of hot water with two tablespoons of pure cocoa powder, which is apparently the amount found in a sachet of instant hot chocolate.

The teas and cocoa were each mixed with 200 ml of boiling water. They tested the phenolic acid and flavonoid contents, and also measured each beverage's antioxidant properties by doing ABTS and DPPH assays—the names are so long I'd rather provide the information upon request—and expressed the resulting values in terms of Vitamin C equivalent antioxidant capacities (VCEACs).

The results surprised the researchers.

Dr. Chang Yong-lee later said: "If I had made a prediction before conducting the tests, I would have picked green tea as having the most antioxidant activity. When we compared one serving of each beverage, the cocoa turned out to have the highest in antioxidant activity, and that was surprising to me."

Those two tablespoons of cocoa were found to have a VCEAC of 1,128 mg/serving under the ABTS assay, and a VCEAC of 836 mg/serving under the DPPH assay.

Better than wine, tea

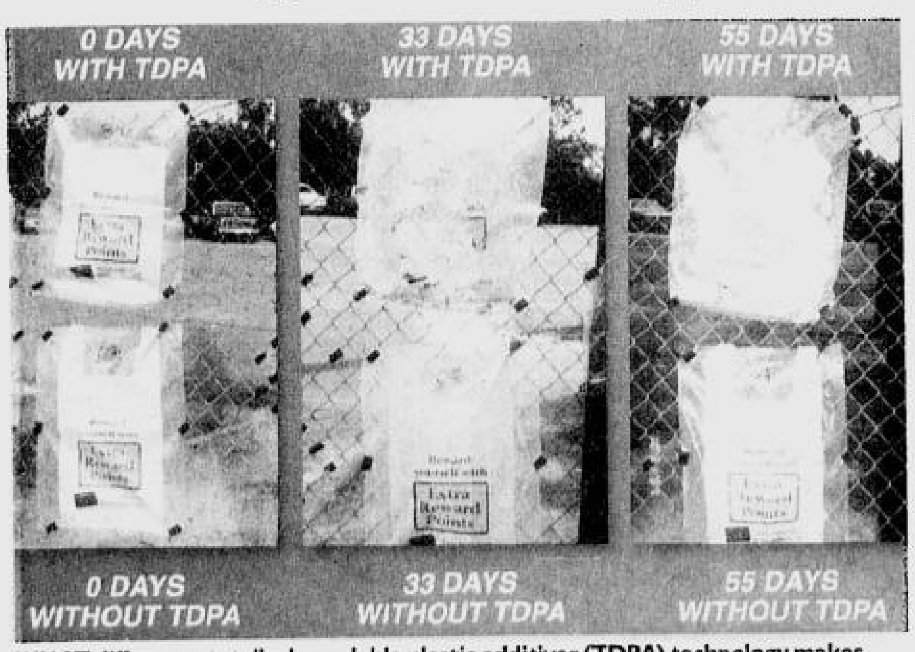
Those numbers are almost twice that found in red wine, about two to three times more than in green tea, and 4-5 times greater than the number for black tea. The tests comparing each drink's phenolic acids and flavonoid contents produced similar results.

The data obtained by the researchers only confirm why dark chocolate is a healthier option compared to milk chocolate. Still, Dr. Chang Yong-lee suggests drinking the cocoa rather than eating it because chocolate bars have more fat than the beverage. Plus, he notes, hot cocoa releases more antioxidants than when the cocoa is ingested cold.

Now that I know all this, I can only thank my *lola* (grandmother) for starting my cancer prevention and healthy living regimen early by making me love hot chocolate made from *tablea* that I now prefer it over coffee. And if anyone needs me, I'll be over at Dulcinea dunking churros in my chocolate.

ILLUSTRATION: GILBERT DAROY

Biodegradable plastics: once a dream now a reality



WHAT difference totally degradable plastic additives (TDPA) technology makes. The plastic bags containing TDPA (top) are biodegrable; the ordinary plastic bags (bottom) are not. TDPA, according to its local distributor, is an environmentally sound answer to the country's solid waste management problem.

By Charles E. Buban

A NEW technology may make the question "Paper or plastic?" obsolete. Environmental Plastics Inc., a Canada-based company, has developed an additive that when mixed with the raw material in making plastics will make any of its products—from shopping bags and packaging to diapers and utensils—entirely biodegradable.

Plastic products containing the totally degradable plastic additives (TDPA) will undergo degradation (or breakdown) with the help of oxygen in the air, mechanical stress (stretching or tearing apart), heat or exposure to ultraviolet light or a combination of all.

The remaining smaller plastic molecules will be manageable for microorganisms like bacteria, fungi and algae to decompose.

However, plastics with TDPA have a shelf-life of only 18 to 24 months (depending on the requirement of the product or its maker) or must be stored properly if not yet in use.

"We are most honored to be the first company to offer this new technology in the Philippines," said Sherwin Lim, president of Planet Friendly Plastics Inc., local distributor of the TDPA technology.

"With plastics that can be 100 percent degradable, we can continue to enjoy the convenience of using plastic products without causing any pollution," he said.

He said TDPA will not in any way affect the quality and performance of the plastic product during its lifetime.

"One will not find any difference, except that when it's time for its disposal, we can be sure it will decompose and not harm the environment," Lim said.

Although the TDPA will slightly affect the cost of producing the plastic, Lim says the technology is cost-effective. He anticipates a large local market for biodegradable plastic bags as more and more Filipinos realize the problems brought about by plastics that clog waterways, landfills and drainage systems.

Solid waste is acknowledged as one of the most pressing environmental problems in the Philippines, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. One report indicates that about 120,000 tons of plastics are generated each year, 50 percent of which end up as litter.

"Like other solid wastes, conventional plastic is resistant to microbial degradation and cannot be disposed through burning since plastic fumes cause a wide range of ailments including skin diseases, asthma and some forms of cancer. Even recycling, widely endorsed to reduce solid wastes, does not effectively reduce the volume of used plastics," Lim said.

EPI's research on TDPA began in 1992.

The company found out that when the additive is mixed with polyethylene (PE) resins—what conventional plastics are made of—during the manufacturing process, it makes plastic film and other single-use plastic products degradable without affecting the quality of the product itself.

"By varying the amount and proportion of different additives, plastic products with TDPA can be totally degradable with controlled shelf life from 60 days to even five to six years," Lim said.

Concerted fight vs COPD

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

CHRONIC obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a common and frequently underdiagnosed lung disease that is progressive if not treated.

During the past 10 years, the National Heart and Lung Institute in the United States has observed an escalating number of deaths caused by the disease. The organization predicted that if the trend continues, COPD will be the third leading cause of deaths by the year 2020.

COPD is a term used to describe airflow obstruction associated mainly with two types of lung ailments: emphysema and chronic bronchitis. It is often tagged a "smoker's disease" since majority of COPD patients are smokers.

COPD decreases the lungs' ability to take in oxygen and expel carbon dioxide. As the disease progresses, the walls of the lung's small airways and alveoli lose their elasticity. The airway walls collapse, closing off some of the smaller air passages and narrowing larger ones. The whole airway becomes clogged with mucus.

Air continues to reach the alveoli when the lungs expand during inhalation. However, it is often unable to escape during exhalation because the air passages tend to collapse, trapping the "stale" air in the lungs.

World COPD Day

To prevent the increasing number of deaths caused by COPD, the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) organized the World COPD Day. The event, which was simultaneously held worldwide, represented a partnership between health-care groups and respiratory educators to raise awareness about COPD. It was built upon the success of the first World COPD Day last year.

"The primary aim of this celebration is make the public aware that COPD is a public health problem," said Dr. Teresita de Guia, GOLD launch leader in the Philippines.

She said the celebration aims to decrease the deaths caused by COPD through the implementation and evaluation of effective programs for diagnosis and management.

Dr. De Guia is banking on the support of family physicians in promoting correct diagnosis and prevention of the disease.

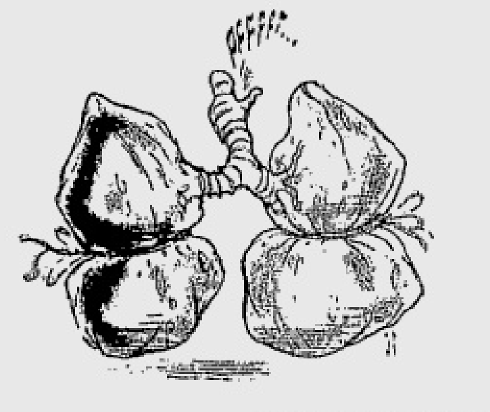


ILLUSTRATION: GILBERT DAROY

"Our target is for the family physician to be able to recognize early if his patient is suffering from COPD. Once he suspects that his patient is suffering from it, he should immediately have the person undergo lung testing," said Dr. De Guia.

By doing so, patients will be diagnosed and treated earlier. This could help a lot in managing the disease.

Preventing COPD

COPD prevention in the country is in full swing.

Republic Act 9211, the Tobacco Regulation Act, has recently been enacted. This law prohibits smoking in public and confined areas where people can be affected by cigarette smoke.

Dr. De Guia also lauded pharmaceutical companies in their contribution to the promotion of COPD awareness.

"These are the companies which spend millions looking for a drug to treat COPD. The Philippines is lucky because we are one of the very few countries which has a drug for COPD," she said.

This drug is co-marketed by Boehringer Ingelheim and Pfizer, two of the main sponsors of the World COPD Day 2003 celebration in the country held recently at the Quezon City Memorial Circle.

Treatment guidelines

GOLD, in cooperation with the Philippine College of Chest Physicians' Council on COPD and Pulmonary Rehabilitation, will soon launch guidelines on the diagnosis and treatment of COPD. It will include a guide on what a physician should do if he suspects that a patient is suffering from COPD.

"The World COPD Day celebration is just one of the few activities being done to fight COPD. Much still needs to be done and a concerted effort from all sectors of society is needed," said Dr. De Guia.

With the strong influence of the tobacco industry especially on young people who are easily enticed to light up a cigarette stick, the fight against COPD will truly be an uphill climb. Unless we get rid of its main cause which is smoking, it will be like sweeping dirt under the rug.

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Paul R. De Castro, DMD

Crowded teeth

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Jose A.

You could get braces again but I hope you learned your lesson and will wear your retainers this time. If you don't want any more extractions, then the width of your teeth can be lessened to allow the teeth to be straightened. This will look good only if your teeth look wide.

Your dentist can also put veneers on the teeth that are crowded. No braces are involved here and although your teeth will still be crowded, the veneers will create an optical illusion so your teeth will appear straight.

E-mail your questions at dentalqs@yahoo.com.

Therapharma rolls back price of simvastatin

PATIENTS taking cholesterol-lowering statins are in for a Christmas treat as Therapharma announced an 18-22 percent price rollback of its brand of simvastatin.

James Dio, Therapharma general manager, said they have converted into an actual price rollback the discounts which the company had been giving patients through their Health Plus Value Program.

"Now, everyone can benefit from this general price reduction," Dio said.

Therapharma's simvastatin, which comes in 10-, 20- and 40-mg doses, was introduced a year ago at half the price of a similar brand of simvastatin. In less than a year, it was able to capture a big share of the statin market. Several multinational companies recently rolled back their prices of statins and many health practitioners attribute this to the affordable pricing set by Therapharma.

Therapharma and the other divisions of Unilab have been staunchly advocating pharmacoeconomics which aims to deliver high-quality drugs at affordable prices.

The idea of pharmacoeconomics is to help the patient take his drug for a longer period of time through a bioequivalent medicine, which can eventually translate into optimum clinical benefits at a more reasonable cost. Although the beneficiaries of pharmacoeconomics program are the patients, clinicians and other healthcare providers play a crucial role in its success. Doctors have to make sure that they prescribe a proven bioequivalent alternative drug to ensure treatment success.

Statins have been shown to prolong lives and prevent heart attacks and strokes in high-risk patients especially diabetics and those with established cardiovascular diseases and multiple risk factors such as high blood pressure, obesity and cholesterol abnormalities.

Statins are prescription drugs and patients are advised to consult with their physicians if they are suitable for statin therapy.

Balanced diet for kids

A BALANCED diet is one that includes a combination of several different food types to satisfy the body's nutritional needs. These food types include fresh fruit and vegetables, grains, meat, dairy products, and fats and oils.

The idea of a proper diet also includes eating food in the right proportions, because the aim is to get all the nutrients your body needs while maintaining a healthy weight.

The next step to have healthy kids is to have a clear idea of the nutritional value of each type of food included in a balanced diet.

Parents must give their kids healthy macronutrient-rich snacks throughout the day, aside from providing your children with healthy full meals. Dietary surveys show that the foods most commonly eaten by children as snacks are biscuits, potato chips, chocolate and carbonated drinks.

While fruits are a good source of vitamins and minerals, instant noodles are also an ideal alternative. They are also tasty and also easy to prepare. Instant snacks are even fortified with micronutrients.

A balanced diet is important for your children to achieve their full potential. While it can sometimes seem that children don't like to eat what's "good for them," parents should remember that healthy habits start young.

Make sure your kids get the proper nutrition today.

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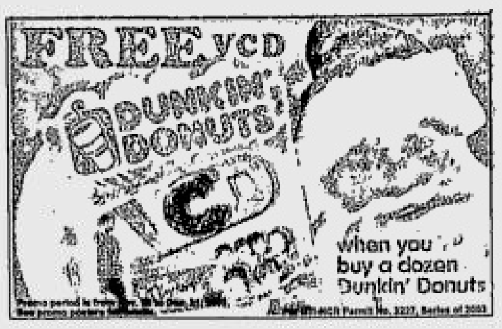
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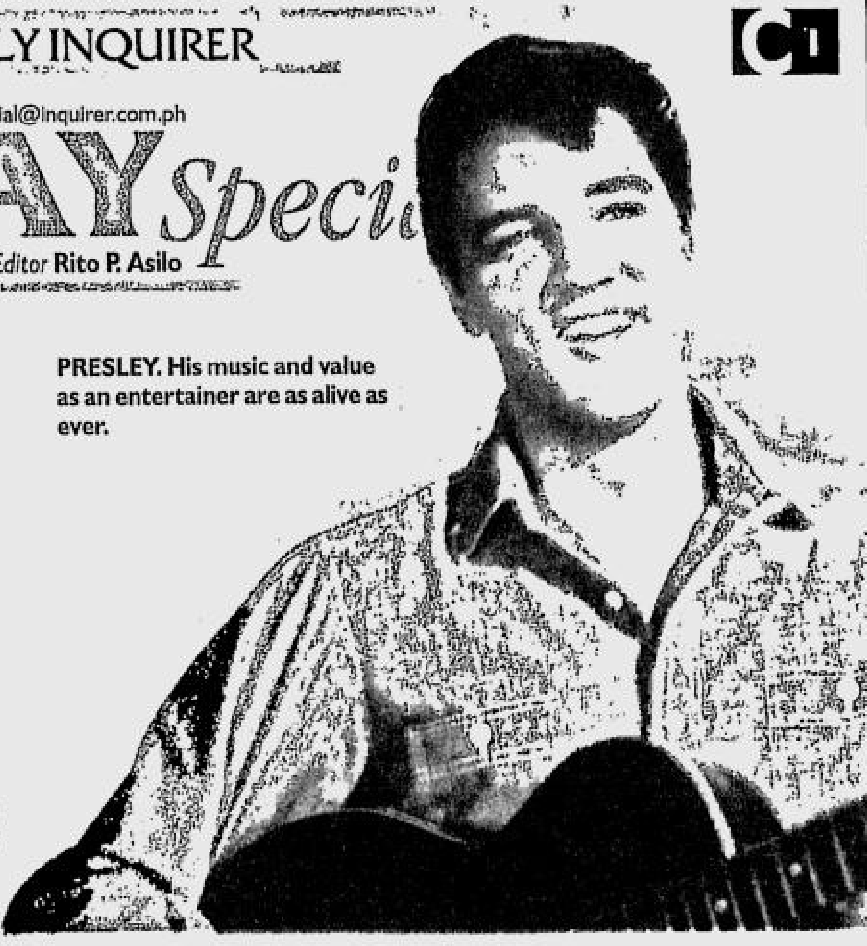
Broadway to get big taste of Elvis in 2005



PRESLEY. His music and value as an entertainer are as alive as ever.

MEMPHIS, Tennessee—Always eager to keep Elvis Presley working, managers of his estate have turned their sights on Broadway.

Presley died in 1977 at his Memphis residence, Graceland, but his music and his value as an entertainer or advertising pitchman are as alive as ever.

String of hits

"All Shook Up," a musical commissioned by the Elvis Presley estate and featuring a string of Presley's hit songs, is scheduled to open on Broadway in spring 2005. It will first play at Goodspeed Musicals' Norma Terris Theater in Chester, Connecticut, May 13-June 6, 2004.

The plot concerns what happens in a loveless town when a magical jukebox and a lady-loving, leather-clad stranger arrive, producer Jonathan Pollard said Tuesday. It takes place in the mid-1950s in roughly "Anywhere USA," he added.

"We are going to Goodspeed Chester to get a sense of what we have," the producer told the Associated Press. "It's the first step in the development (of the show)."

The musical will then move to a larger city (not yet decided), before heading to Broadway.

20 songs

"All Shook Up" is not about Presley, and no actor plays him in the show, but it includes 20 of his songs, including such hits as "Heartbreak Hotel," "Love Me Tender" and "Burning Love" as well as lesser-known pieces.

Jack Soden, chief executive of Elvis Presley Enterprises, said he and his staff came up with the Broadway idea about two years ago, largely due to the success of "Mamma Mia!," a musical featuring the music of the pop group Abba.

"If your full-time job is Elvis, we kind of do thinktanks. We sit around and we look at the world, and think of opportunities for us," Soden said.

Joe DiPietro, author of the musical, "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change," was hired to write the play and came up with the story. The estate didn't want a Presley biography.

"It probably wouldn't succeed because it would be dismissed as a highly produced Elvis impersonator show," Soden said.

Pollard has lined up several backers for the show, including Clear Channel Entertainment and Miramax Films.

Only child

The Presley estate, which holds the publishing rights to many of the hundreds of songs Elvis recorded, is owned entirely by his only child, daughter Lisa Marie.

Graceland, with its complex of souvenir shops, attracts more than 600,000 visitors a year.

Soden said the show already has begun to draw a bit of notice, generally in the entertainment industry.

"The process of developing a show like this is a long one, so you kind of have a tendency to both acknowledge that it's underway and being worked on, but you don't really go, 'Get ready, public, here we come,'" he said.

AP

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'Cat in the Hat' tops box office with $24 million weekend take

LOS ANGELES—In a box office tussle of movies aimed at the young, "Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat" topped Eddie Murphy's "The Haunted Mansion."

Final figures released Monday put "Cat" with $24,459,685 for Friday through Sunday, while "Haunted" earned $24,278,410.

Tallies

Studio estimates for the weekend's top spot flip-flopped as the tallies came in within a few hundred thousand dollars of each other.

The Walt Disney Co. claimed the lead position Sunday with "The Haunted Mansion," but Universal Pictures later usurped the top spot by adding to its total for "The Cat in the Hat."

Universal said it reported an erroneous figure originally, and Disney did not object to the change.

No independent verification exists for the box office tally, which is compiled from information provided by the studios. When collecting their own data from thousands of theaters across the United States, most studios also gather information about the competition, which helps keep the reporting honest, said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box office tracker Exhibitor Relations Co.

MIKE Myers, star of "Dr. Seuss' The Cat In The Hat" AP

MURPHY. His Disney movie narrowly missed the top spot.

Top 10 movies

The top 10 movies at North American theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled by Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc. and Nielsen EDI Inc. are:

1. "Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat," Universal, $24,459,685, 3,464 locations, $7,061 average, $75,830,805, two weeks.
2. "The Haunted Mansion," Disney, $24,278,410, 3,122 locations, $7,777 average, $34,046,111, one week.
3. "Elf," New Line, $21,649,842, 3,202 locations, $6,761 average, $129,009,719, four weeks.
4. "Gothika," Warner Bros., $12,868,471, 2,382 locations, $5,402 average, $41,277,711, two weeks.
5. "Master & Commander: The Far Side of the World," Fox, $12,408,731, 2,703 locations, $4,591 average, $66,632,517, three weeks.
6. "Bad Santa," Miramax, $12,292,952, 2,005 locations, $6,131 average, $16,801,187, one week.
7. "The Missing," Sony, $10,833,633, 2,756 locations, $3,931 average, $15,232,287, one week.
8. "Timeline," Paramount, $8,440,629, 2,787 locations, $3,029 average, $12,424,762, one week.
9. "Love Actually," Universal, $8,218,630, 1,706 locations, $4,817 average, $43,390,140, four weeks.
10. "Brother Bear," Disney, $4,872,344, 2,034 locations, $2,395 average, $77,695,232, six weeks.

AP

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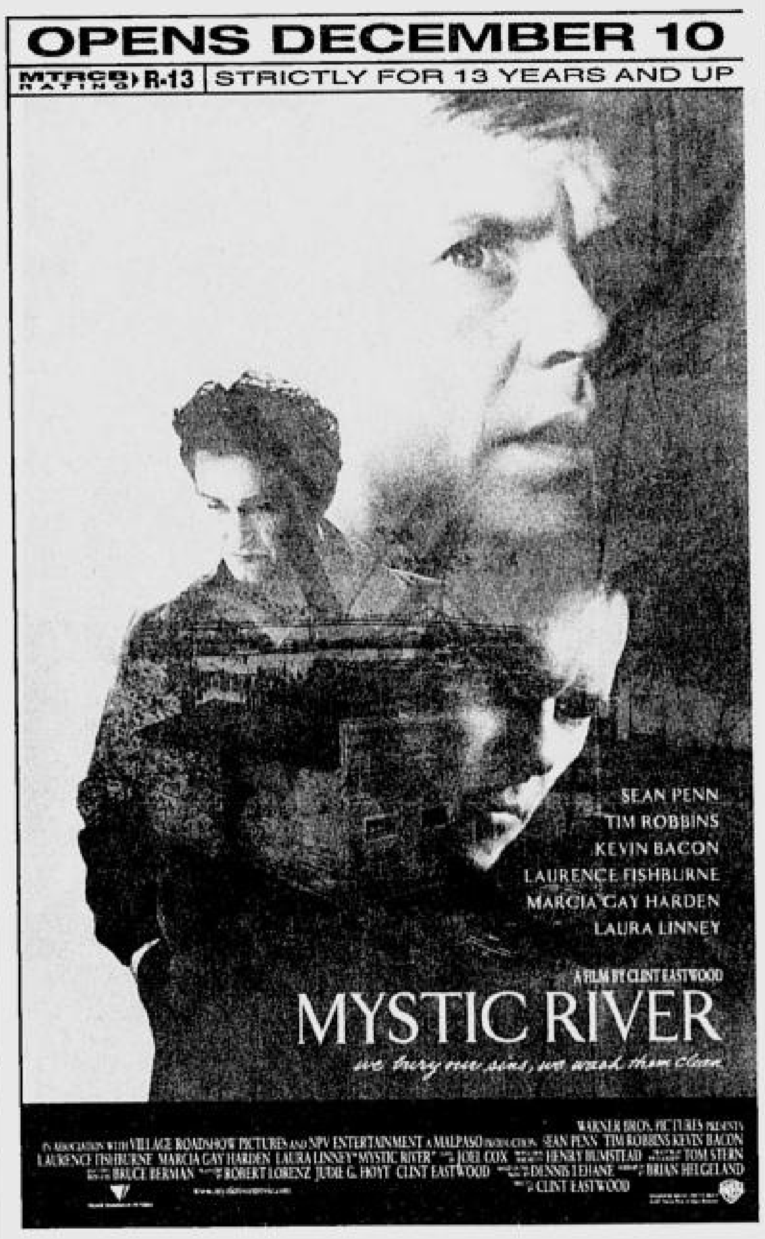

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Tanya Garcia has learned to love acting

By Jocelyn Valle

GARCIA. Started out in ABS-CBN's "Esperanza."

"DON'T burn bridges," says Tanya Garcia. The 22-year-old stunner may have become a soap star two years ago because of Channel 7's "Sana Ay Ikaw na Nga," but she started out in the biz via Channel 2's *teleserye*, "Esperanza," at age 17.

Decision

"I have no problems with my bosses, *nagpaalam naman ako sa kanila ng maayos*," says Tanya, adding that she understands colleague Angelika dela Cruz's decision to go back to her original network, ABS-CBN, after starring in two soap operas for GMA 7. "We go where our work takes us."

And Tanya is taking her work more seriously now. "At first, my goal was just to buy the things I wanted," she admits. "But I've learned to love acting, and to improve as a performer."

This includes being more accessible to fans. "With me, what you see is what you get," says Tanya, whose penetrating gaze makes her look *suplada* to many people. "But I've learned to reach out to them even when I'm very tired."

Temperamental

Tanya makes it clear, though, that she isn't being "plastic." "I really show how I feel. My parents raised me to fight for what is right. I can also be temperamental because I'm a Leo."

That's why she can identify more with her role in her new soap. Unlike the *api-apihan* Cecilia in "Sana Ay Ikaw na Nga," Althea in "Twin Hearts" is feisty.

She also enjoys working on her new show because the treatment is lighter and younger. The challenge, she adds, is how to maintain the high ratings of "Sana Ay Ikaw na Nga," which gave birth to the popular love team of Tanya and matinee idol Dingdong Dantes.

Chemistry

Tanya shares that she and Dingdong don't consciously work on their chemistry. "We don't exert effort to appear sweet together," she points out. "We don't meddle with each other's personal lives, but we're close. We have common friends and we go out as a group."

Tanya is glad that she and Dingdong are pursuing their individual careers. On the silver screen, Dingdong has been paired with Judy Ann Santos, Jolina Magdangal (in the forthcoming "Annie B") and Rica Peralejo (in "Malikmata").

First time

Dingdong's TV leading lady, on the other hand, gets cozy with Wendell Ramos in Viva Films' "Filipinas." It's special to Tanya because it is the first time that she's working with director Joel Lamangan and drama heavyweights Maricel Soriano, Dawn Zulueta, Richard Gomez and Aiko Melendez.

It also marks Tanya's foray into more daring roles. But she isn't about to give the Viva Hot Babes a run for their money. "I can do kissing scenes, but that's about it," she declares.

Audrey Hepburn lived life of infinite sadness

By Bob Thomas

HEPBURN. The "screenplay" of her life was divided into three acts.

SANTA MONICA, California—From Princess Anne in "Roman Holiday" to Eliza Doolittle in "My Fair Lady," Audrey Hepburn seemed the epitome of inner calm and self-reliance.

Self-doubt

But to her son, she was a woman beset with sadness and self-doubt.

"She remembered vividly the fear she felt as a child when the German troops invaded the city of Arnhem, in the Netherlands, where she spent most of the war," writes Sean Hepburn Ferrer in his new book, "Audrey Hepburn, an Elegant Spirit."

"She also told us about how her brothers ate dog biscuits when there was nothing else to eat . . . how the bread was green because the only flour available was made from peas. She spent the whole day in bed reading so as not to feel the hunger."

Hepburn also suffered the loss of her father—not from the war, but by desertion. He left the family when war was declared, and she didn't see him until 20 years later, when she was an international movie star.

Sean Ferrer, the only son of Audrey Hepburn and Mel Ferrer, was interviewed at the offices of the Audrey Hepburn Children's Fund in Santa Monica.

One-man operation

The fund is virtually a one-man operation that stages exhibits and events to benefit Unicef, to which Hepburn devoted her final years. Her son's proceeds from the book go to the fund.

About his mother's sadness, Ferrer commented: "I believe that you can't know courage without conquering fear, and you can't really know joy without knowing sadness."

He explained the "screenplay" that was his mother's life was divided into three acts: 1. Pursuing a highly successful film career; 2. Raising her two sons (she has a son from her marriage to Italian psychiatrist Andrea Dotti); 3. Devoting herself to Unicef after the sons became adults.

"I think that emotional marks are made early on," Ferrer said. "Even if you can rationalize them as you grow up, they still leave that dank sadness you can never truly shake.

"That's why she believed that one of the priorities in our society should be to address the children who are in need. Not just for a cup of soup or another vitamin, but to see what war does to children and protect them as much emotionally as we should physically."

Residual payments

Sean Ferrer is a tall, husky 43-year-old whose dark hair bears the beginnings of gray. His own professional life is divided among conducting the work of the Audrey Hepburn Children's Fund, managing his mother's legacy by policing piracy of her image and checking residual payments from her movies, and pursuing his own career in films.

Children

"I didn't write the book now," he explained. "I started thinking about it shortly after my mother passed away. I didn't know if it was going to be a book, but I wanted to sit down and write about this time in my life for my children."

"Audrey Hepburn, An Elegant Spirit" is a large-format book loaded with illustrations and an intimate look at her personal life, from her unhappy childhood to her graceful death. *AP*

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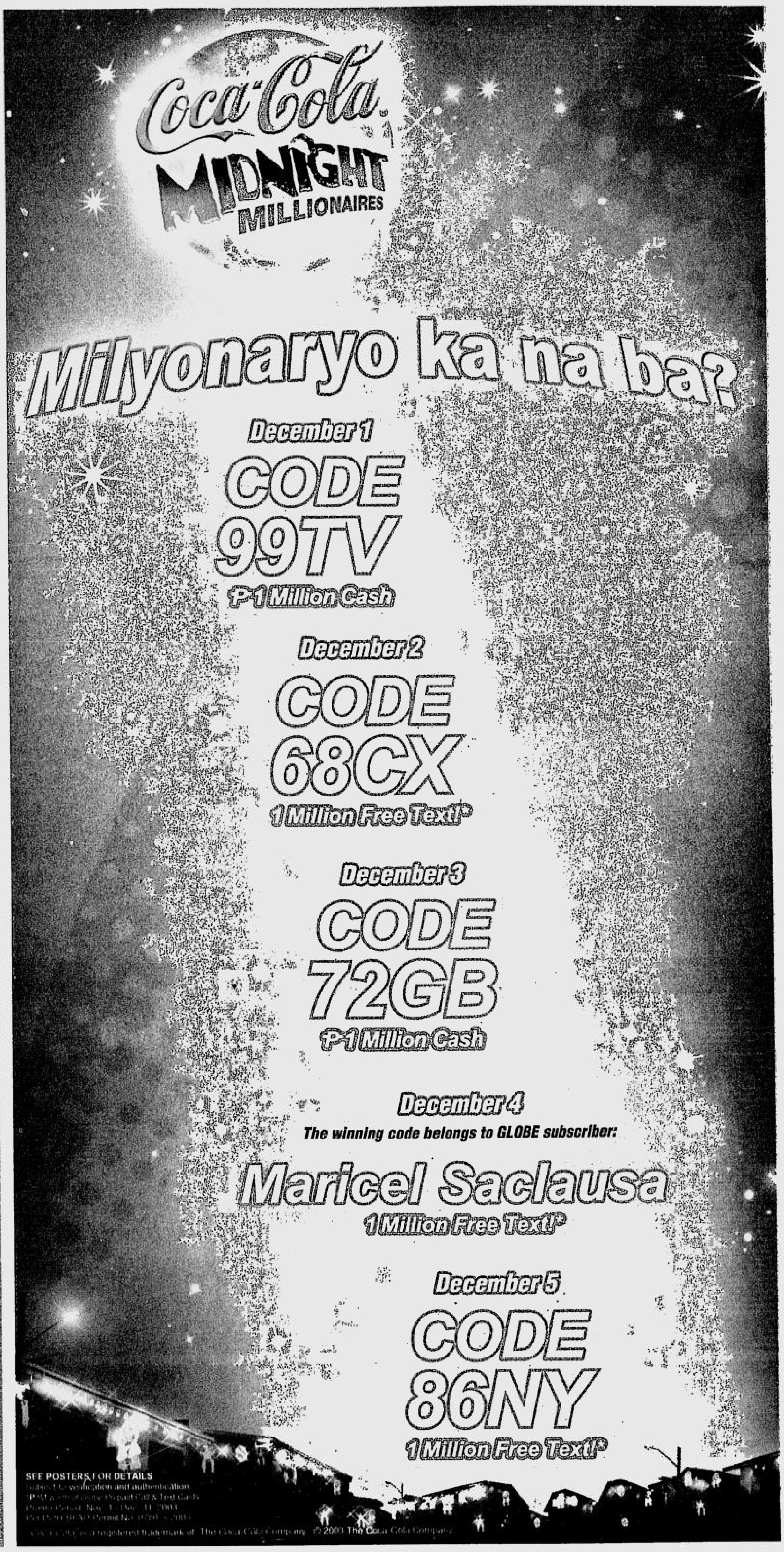
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Patricia Ismael is a cute bundle of music and comedy

By Andy P. Bais

ISMAEL. Comedic talent goes beyond her diminutive size.

PATRICIA Ismael sounds like the name of a sexy star. In reality, however, she'll never give the likes of Diana Zubiri and Francine Prieto any sleepless nights. But her comedic talent is something else, it goes way beyond her diminutive size.

Political satire

Patricia was a cute bundle of joy to watch in the hilarious political satire, "Electile Dysfunction," shown recently to capacity crowds at The Republic of Malate. Her on-target impersonation of President GMA, was the best we've seen thus far.

She confesses that it was her first time to impersonate the president, but the crowd just loved her. In the mock election held during the show, she handily won over her "political rivals." For us, her edge over other GMA clones is her petite size, which closely approximates GMA's.

Patricia's dream was to be a doctor, but she settled for communication arts at UST instead.

In school, she was always the life of the party.

Little did she know that her gift of gab, wisecracks and good singing voice would be her passports to "fame."

"*Na*-discover *ang* talent *ko sa* sing-along bars, *kasi* I survived *yung mga panglalait ng* hosts. *Pabalang din ang sagot ko*," she explains. Eventually, she became a sing-along bar host herself.

Her comic talent came to the fore during her hosting stints, and other opportunities followed. "I was discovered for TV when I was hosting at Basilica and became a regular on ABS-CBN's 'Body and the Guard' with Aga Muhlach. Other TV shows followed, like 'Whattamen' and 'Ang TV.'"

Maryo J. de los Reyes was instrumental in her becoming a regular on "Habang Kapiling Ka," a GMA-7 *teleserye*.

The director also gave Patricia her break in the movies, as Assunta de Rossi's helper in "Red Diaries."

She is currently a segment host on "Teysi's" "Doble-Oke," where she plays twins.

God has been kind to her, she says. "*Di naman ako pinapalo o kinakawawa sa mga* TV shows *ko*. But I have learned to live with my height.

Self-esteem

"*Di kasi ako lumaking mababa ang* self-esteem. *Di ko nga alam na maliit ako*. I followed the advice of my parents to just do my best and to not take it against anybody if they don't think highly of me."

Although most of her shows require her to be funny, Patricia is still a singer at heart. That's why she formed her own band, "Patricia Ismael with the Ministicks." They play every Friday at Arkdia in Malate.

Early development of musical film format recalled

By Nestor U. Torre

GENE Kelly in "Singin' in the Rain," a '50s musical.

NOW that musical films have staged a successful comeback, thanks to "Moulin Rouge" and "Chicago," some new fans of the entertaining movie format have asked us to recall how it developed in the first place. One letter-sender asks, "What qualifies as a musical movie in the first place?"

Proper mood

Some initial inputs from Lee Edward Stern's "The Movie Musical:" Films which merely utilize music to heighten tension or suspense, underscore the action, or provide the proper mood for scenes, do not qualify as musical films.

Neither do movies in which musical interludes or numbers are inserted to show off the singing, dancing or instrumental talents of their stars (like some westerns topbilled by singing cowboys like Gene Autrey or Roy Rogers).

Nor the heavyhanded biographies of composers or entertainers (Ken Russell's "The Music Lovers" and "The Loves of Isadora Duncan").

The movies that do qualify encompass a wide variety of styles and subjects—from the extravagance and "nonsense" of musicals choreographed and directed by Busby Berkeley, to the wit and grace of Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers starrers, and from film versions of Broadway operettas to vibrantly original music and screenplays.

Consistent

The best musical movies share these elements: They are consistent within the boundaries of their self-imposed style. That style must be established quickly and maintained throughout the film.

Another essential ingredient is movement and brisk pacing. If a musical doesn't move, it doesn't work. The plot may be slim and the characters predictable, but the style and pace must be maintained.

Sometimes, the key to both style and pace is a striking and charismatic lead performer who can carry the film—debonair Fred Astaire, dynamic Gene Kelly, radiant Judy Garland in her early movies, madcap Danny Kaye, Bing Crosby at his casual best, Barbra Streisand working her unique musical magic on audiences, etc.

Sometimes, the impetus comes from a brilliant director—Stanley Donen, Vincente Minnelli, Bob Fosse.

Relevant

Style, movement, melody—the movie musical is escapism at its best. But it can also be relevant, like "Showboat" and "South Pacific," which tackled the issue of racism.

How did it all come about? In the 1920s, even before the movies started to talk, they learned to sing. In 1926, "Don Juan," the first full-length film with a complete musical score, was produced. Starring John Barrymore, it cleverly synchronized music and sound effects to heighten the mood and emphasize the action.

But it wasn't this film that excited the audience. It was a short companion piece (or "added attraction") that featured a symphony orchestra, opera stars, instrumentalists and a dance troupe—all put on film.

The audience's reaction was so overwhelming that some producers decided to further develop the fledgling format.

Less than a year later, "The Jazz Singer" with Al Jolson was released. It contained only a few musical sequences and the first snatches of screen dialogue, but viewers loved it. A great part of the film's success was due to Jolson's personal magnetism.

Broadway stars

After "The Jazz Singer," other pioneering musical movies followed, many of them topbilling Broadway stars, like Marilyn Miller and John McCormack. Their starrers were shot fast, most of them in only two weeks—early musical *pito-pito* productions! Expectedly, only a few of them are worth seeing today.

It was in 1929 that the musical film started to come into its own.

Hobbit film in line following 'LOTR' success

WELLINGTON—The runaway success of "The Lord of the Rings" movie trilogy may be followed by a screen version of JRR Tolkien's original work, "The Hobbit," although it would be a few years away, film executives hinted here Monday.

Completion

Mark Ordesky, "Rings" executive producer, made clear his New Line Cinema company had not finished with the world of Middle Earth following the completion of "The Return of the King," the final movie in "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

"There could be a movie about 'The Hobbit,'" Ordesky told a press conference hours before the world premiere of "The Return of the King."

Peter Jackson, the acclaimed director who spent four years putting the "Lord of the Rings" series together, expressed willingness to translate one more Tolkien work into film, but said it would have to wait until after his next project, a remake of "King Kong."

MCKELLEN. Wants to see a permanent museum for the sets, props and costumes of the popular Tolkien trilogy.

"They haven't talked to me about 'The Hobbit,' and I know there's some difficulty with the rights," Jackson said.

Busy

"If they wanted to talk to me about it, I'd be keen, (but) I'm busy for the next couple of years."

"The Lord of the Rings" cast said they wanted to see a permanent museum established to house the props, sets and costumes created for the trilogy, but the Tolkien estate has not given permission.

"I hope the Tolkien estate relents," said Sir Ian McKellen, who plays the character Gandalf.

Jackson said all the props from the movies were being stored "so sometime in the future, we may be able to do something." Ordesky said New Line would support such a museum, but the rights lay with the Tolkien estate. AFP

Solution for overeating

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

WHEN the blue Xenical capsule first came out, it sold like hotcakes. It was the solution of many foodies for overeating.

Excuse

Believed to absorb and flush out fat, it provided an excuse for many to pig out. But it is no longer as hot as it used to be. So, foodies are still on the lookout for something that will ease the guilt of a food trip, or lessen fat intake.

Before a recent steak meal, a friend gave me an enzyme tablet and two fiber capsules. The enzyme helps digest the food faster and the fiber helps absorb the fat, and is supposed to flush it out. I wasn't totally convinced, but it wasn't bad.

Just a couple of weeks ago, someone told me about this new fiber called C-Lium Fibre. Mix about a tablespoon in a glass of juice or water and drink it, then follow it up with another glass of water. After a day, the results are unbelievable. I was so impressed with the fiber that I kept telling everyone about it.

Two glasses

Boy, it just cleans out your system. I was told that an experiment was done on it: They got two glasses half-filled with water, and added oil to both, which of course floated on top. Then they added a certain brand of fiber to one glass and added C-Lium to the other. The fiber in the first glass almost dissolved, while the C-Lium fiber absorbed the fat and swelled into a gel.

It doesn't claim to have any health benefits, though. I don't really care as long as it absorbs the fat. And because it swells up, it gives one the feeling of being slightly full so that you eat less. For regularity of "visits," this is the perfect solution.

Other benefits

Other benefits: regulates movement, cleans colon and intestines, is a natural fat absorber, expels body toxins, lowers bad cholesterol (better than oatmeal), flushes out intestinal worms, relieves indigestion, treats colic and gastritis, eases abdominal bloating, reduces acidity, controls diarrhea and works like an intestinal broom.

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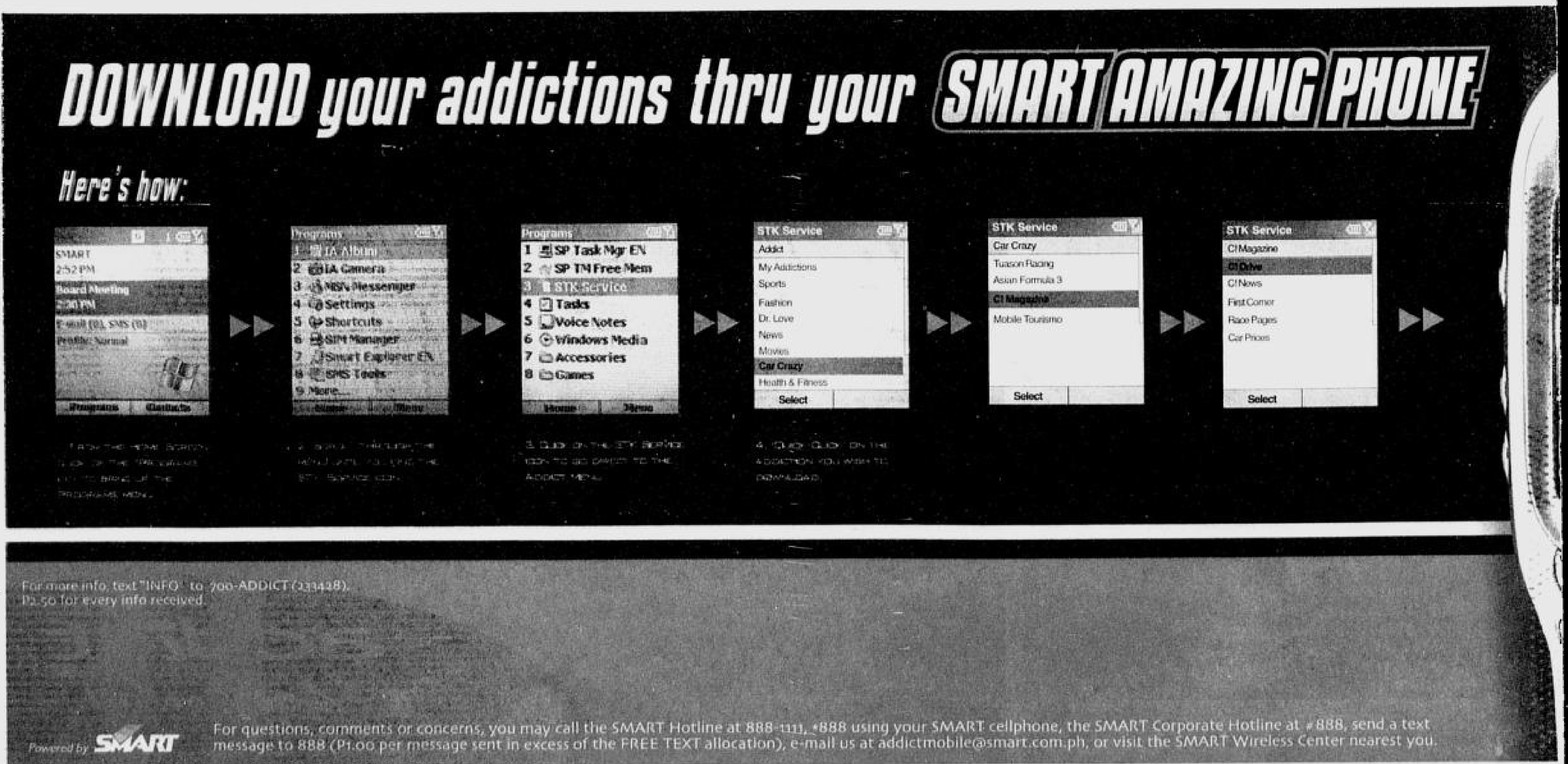
Happy eating!

For comments email sandydaza@shaw.ca



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Sundance announces some films in 2004 festival line-up

SALT LAKE CITY—Kevin Bacon and Courtney Cox Arquette are among actors whose films are entered in the 2004 Sundance Film Festival, an annual 11-day movie party staged in Utah.

Officials

Festival officials on Monday announced entries for dramatic, documentary and "American Spectrum" categories of the festival, which kicks off Jan. 15 in Park City.

Bacon and his wife, Kyra Sedgwick, are teamed with hip-hop artist Mos Def in "The Woodsman," a drama directed by Nicole Kassell that tells the story of a convicted child molester trying to rebuild his life.

Other dramatic entries include "We Don't Live Here Anymore," the story of a man's affair with his best friend's wife. The film, directed by John Curran, stars Mark Ruffalo, Laura Dern, Peter Krause and Naomi Watts.

Cox Arquette stars in "November," directed by Greg Harrison. The actress plays Sophie Jacobs, a photographer who struggles to cope after her boyfriend is shot to death in a convenience store.

Festival director Geoffrey Gillmore said "November" exemplifies the thread of anxiety running through many of this year's films.

"This is the first group of movies" conceived and produced since Sept. 11, 2001, he said. "There's a sense of anxiety in a lot of the work, a sense of disruption."

Documentary entries

Documentary entries include "Chisholm '72—Unbought and Unbossed," an examination of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm's 1972 presidential bid; "The Fight," a look at the historic heavyweight boxing match between American Joe Louis and German Max Schmeling on the eve of World War II; and "Word Wars," an examination of the lives of expert scrabble players.

Music gets exposure, too, with the documentary, "Metallica: Some Kind of Monster"—an unusual look at the heavy metal band undergoing group therapy to help its members through addiction, fatherhood and "near-total disintegration" while recording their first original studio album in six years.

The festival will soon announce its opening night film, as well as those in the premiere, world cinema and several other categories. Short films appearing at the festival will be announced Dec. 8. *AP*

BACON. Teams up with hip-hop artist Mos Def in "The Woodsman."

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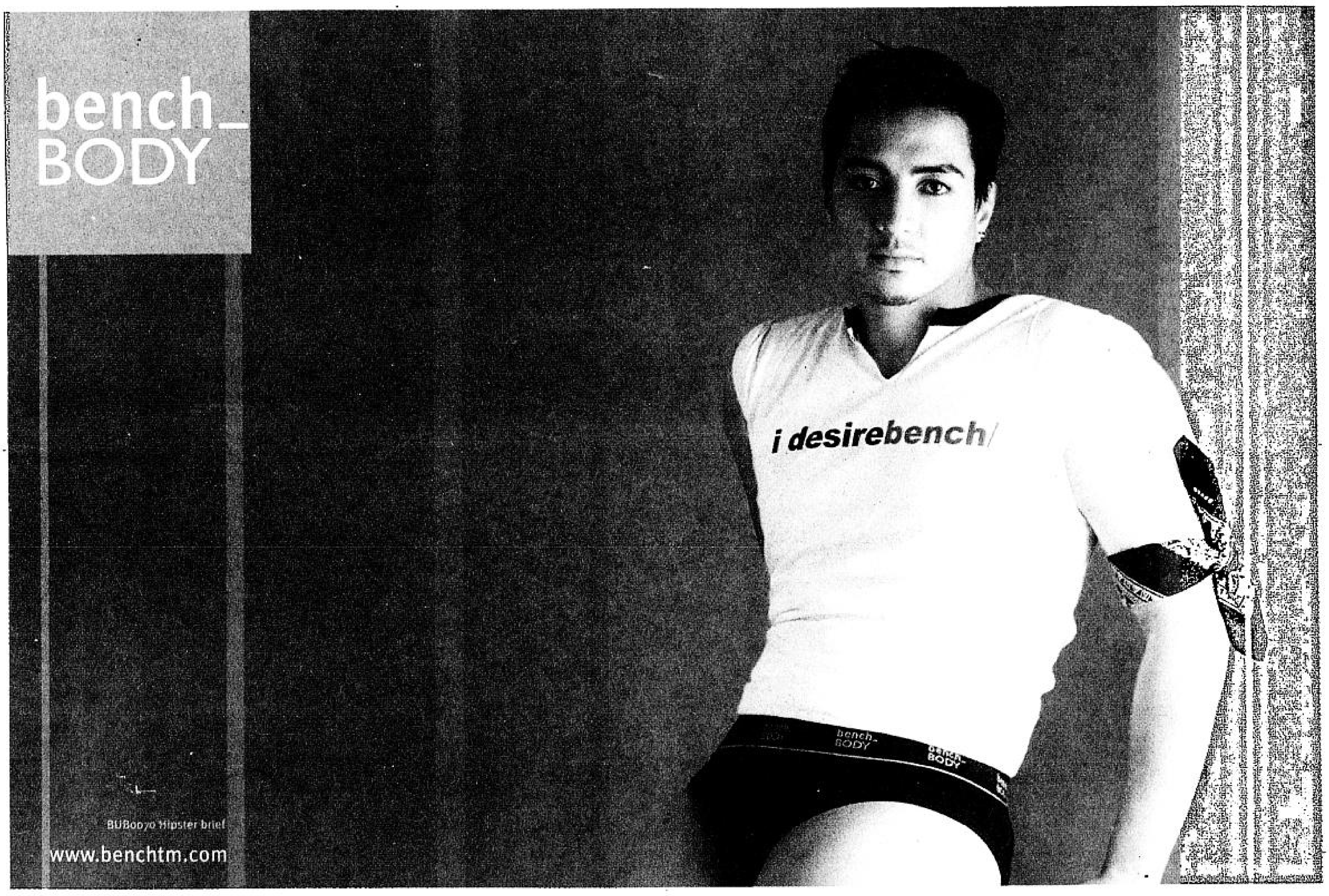

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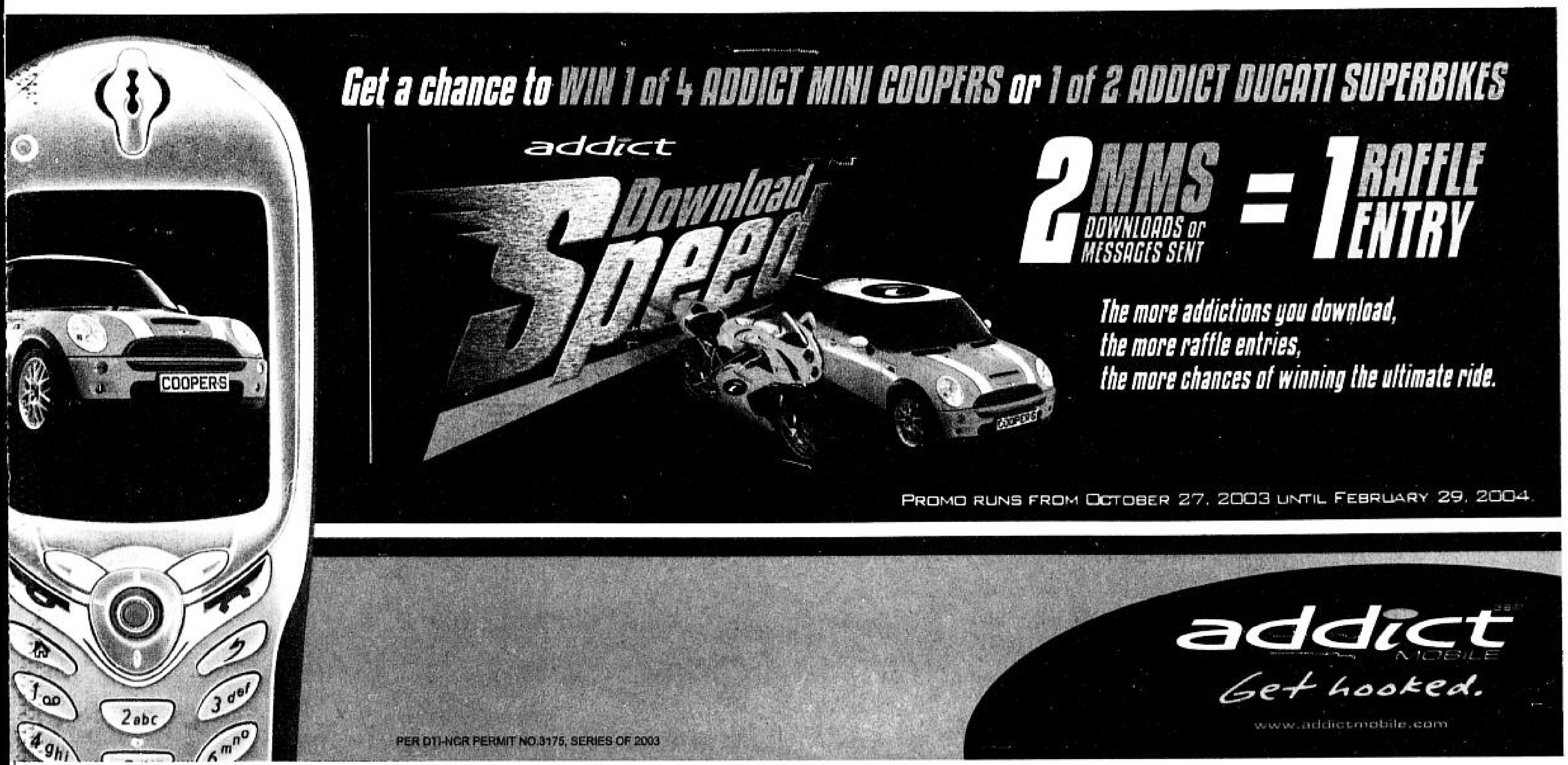

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Diversity for diversity's sake finds a home in Nelly Furtado's music

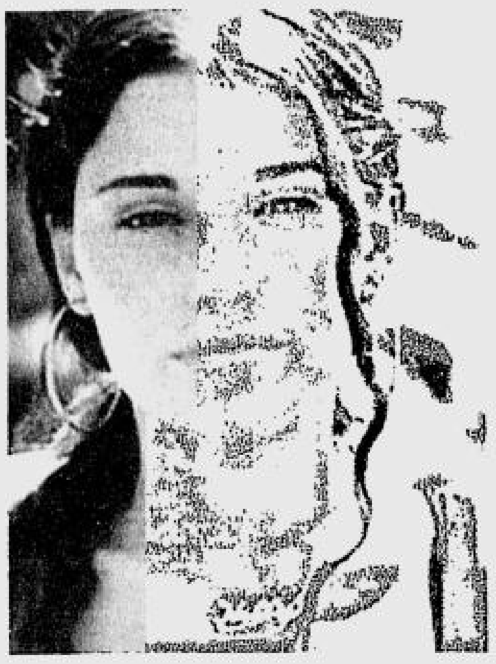
NEW YORK—As a four-year-old, Nelly Furtado hid behind the living room couch, listening to her mother practice Portuguese hymns with friends in the church choir. She also would raid her father's record collection to hear Blondie, Led Zeppelin, Abba and Billy Joel albums. She'd sing Joel's songs over and over.

Musical eclecticism

Furtado learned the spirit of musical eclecticism at an early age. And now with the release of her second album—two decades later—she's made it her signature.

The disc's lead track, "One-Trick Pony," is all about not being pinned down to a style. In a single song, she manages to include a hip-hop beat, a banjo, the classical Kronos Quartet and a Hawaiian guitar.

"I do feel like I'm a standout, that I'm separate from the pack, that I've carved out my own niche in the pop world by giving my music an international edge and putting a new spin on how I do things," she said. "Diversity is my strength."


FURTADO. "I've carved my own niche in the pop world."

Furtado, who turns 25 Tuesday, grew up in British Columbia, the daughter of immigrant parents from Portugal's Azores. She won a Grammy in 2002 for her song, "I'm Like a Bird," off her debut album, "Whoa, Nelly," which has sold 2.4 million copies.

Creative writing

After some predictable second-album jitters where she briefly considered quitting and going back to school to study creative writing, she completed the disc, "Folklore," and took time off to have her first baby, Nevis.

With her album out on the week of the Thanksgiving holiday, Furtado worked through the holiday on interviews and appearances, delaying one talk so she could feed Nevis in a hotel room.

It's not exactly the glamorous life she pictured as a teenager when, having cleaned rooms in the Robin Hood Motel in Victoria, she'd take a soda out to the roof and daydream about a musical career.

But it beats being a maid.

When Furtado performed after her first album, the place she felt most at home was with Moby's Area One concert tour, where she shared a bill with Moby, Incubus, OutKast and the Roots.

"Nothing made sense," she said. "Just a lot of people onstage. And that's what music should be. It should be a celebration of differences."

In school, she played in the jazz band, the marching band and the concert band. She played the ukulele and the trombone, and that doesn't even account for the music she played with friends.

Open-minded

"I've never really stuck to one genre," she said. "Maybe when I was a young teenager. I was really into hip-hop and R&B, but aside from that phase I think I've been pretty open-minded my whole life when it comes to music. It's hard not to be when you grow up speaking and singing in two languages."

Furtado and her producers, the Canadian duo of Gerald Eaton and Brian West, treated the recording studio as their personal playground.

The striking song, "Childhood Dreams," is a stately ballad built around a pipe organ found in a church. Concerned the song was getting too classical-sounding, Furtado threw in an Indian instrument, the tabla.

The album also features an appearance by one of Furtado's musical heroes, Brazilian singer Caetano Veloso, who she admires for—you guessed it—his eclecticism.

Furtado sent the song, "Island of Wonder," to him and was delighted when Veloso wrote back how much he liked it and wanted to sing it. Veloso didn't realize that the music was built off a sample from one of his own albums.

"People always ask me, 'Why do you throw all these things in the mix?'" she said. "And I don't know any other way. I can't separate myself from my culture."

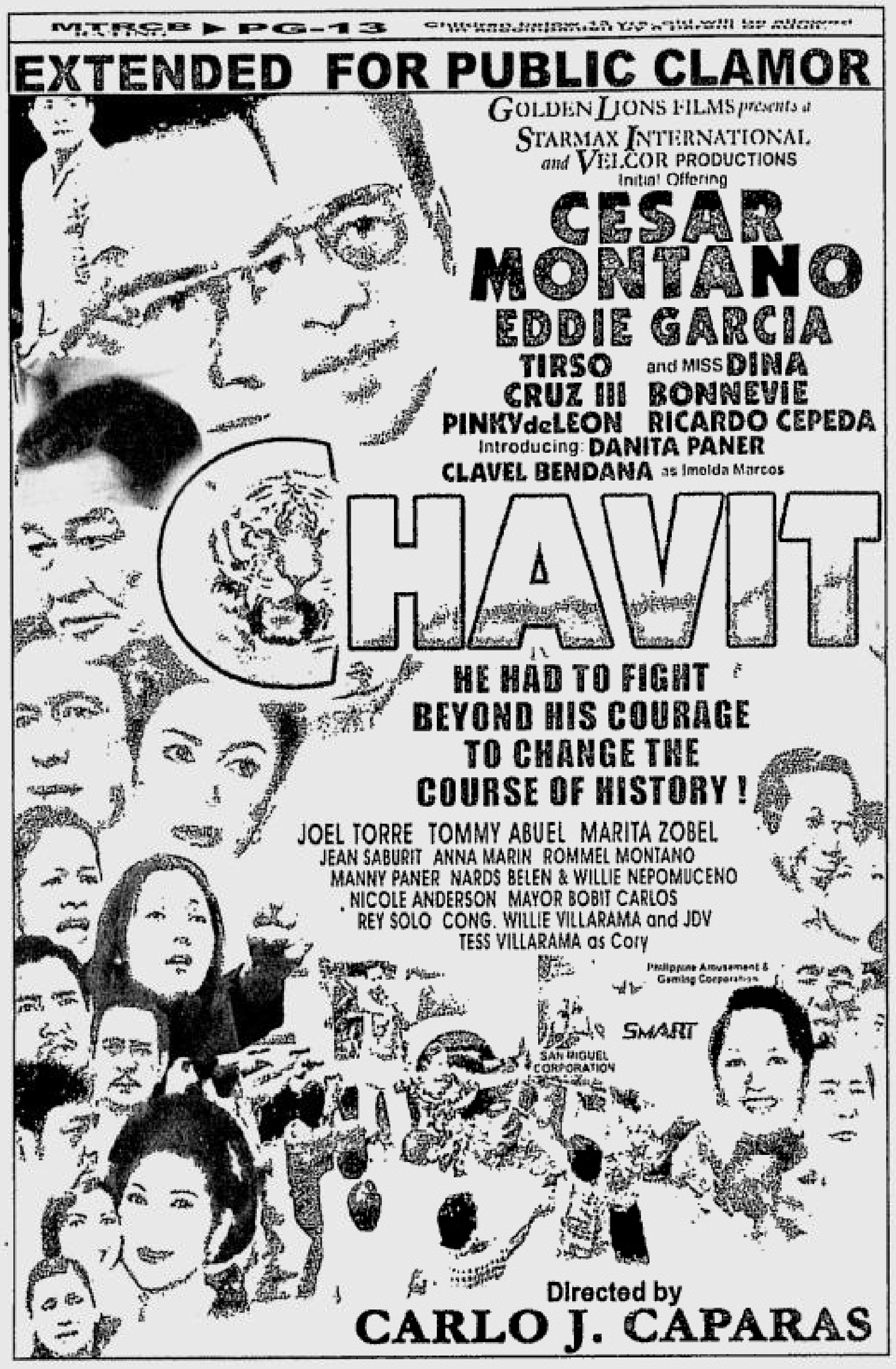
Lyrics

Furtado has attracted some attention for the lyrics to her new single, "Powerless (Say What You Want)," which hint at prejudice in how she's portrayed.

She sings: "Paint my face in your magazines, make it look whiter than it seems. Paint me over with your dreams, shove away my ethnicity."

Asked about it, Furtado said she's not referring to a specific incident. The lyrics refer not to how she's portrayed in the media, but instead recall some of her difficulties as a child of Portuguese parents mixing cultures.

"Growing up, I was the only kid in my elementary school who didn't have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich in my lunchbox," she said. "That has an effect on you." *AP*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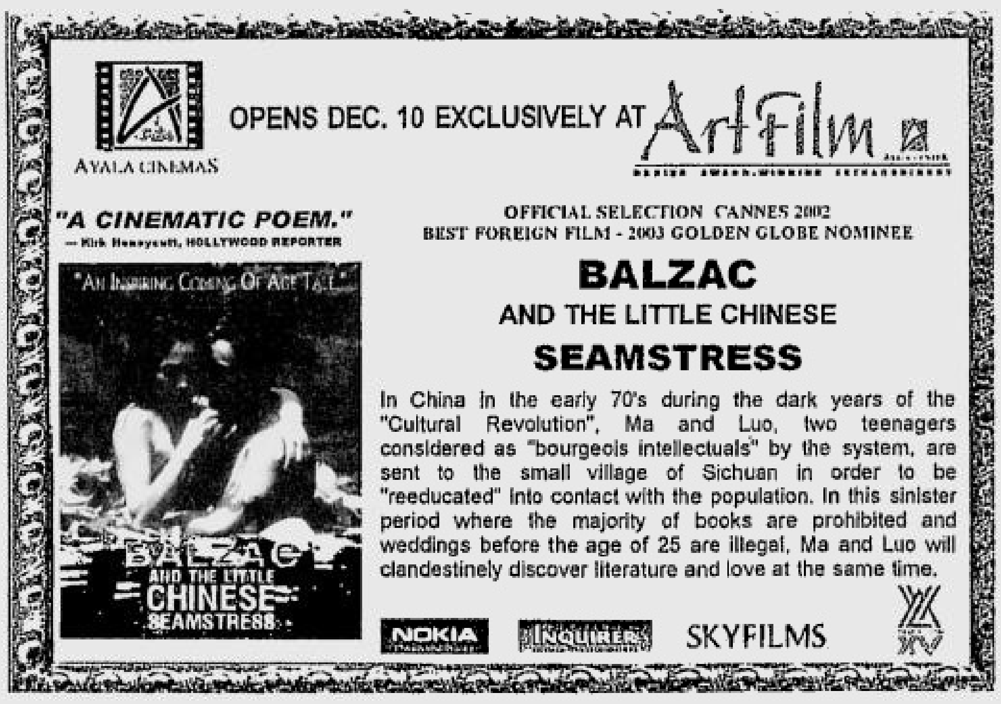
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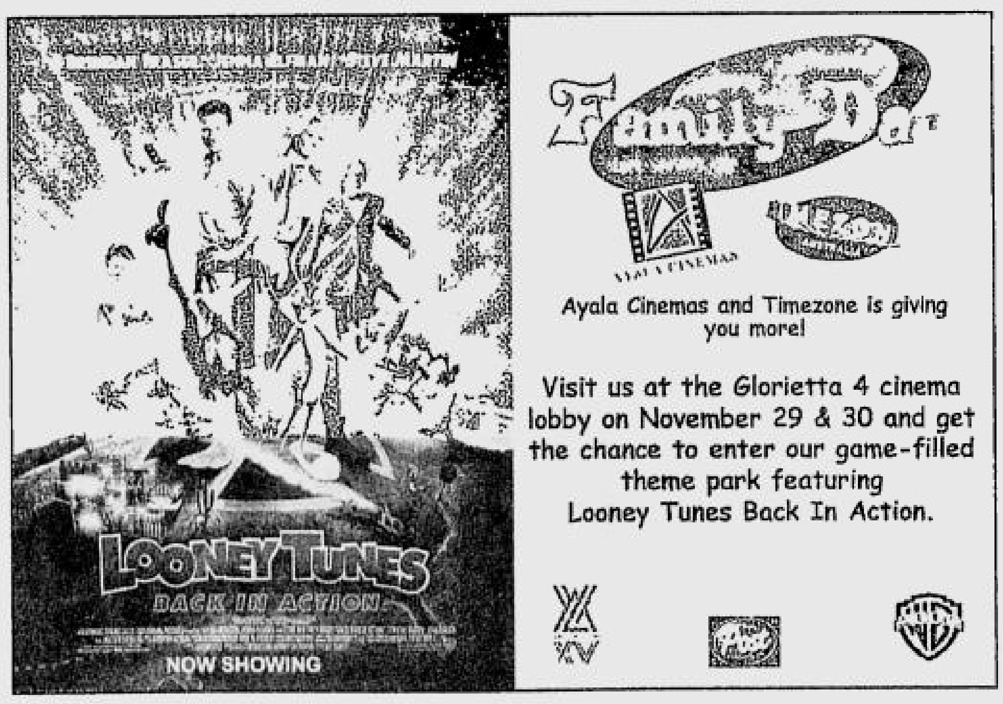
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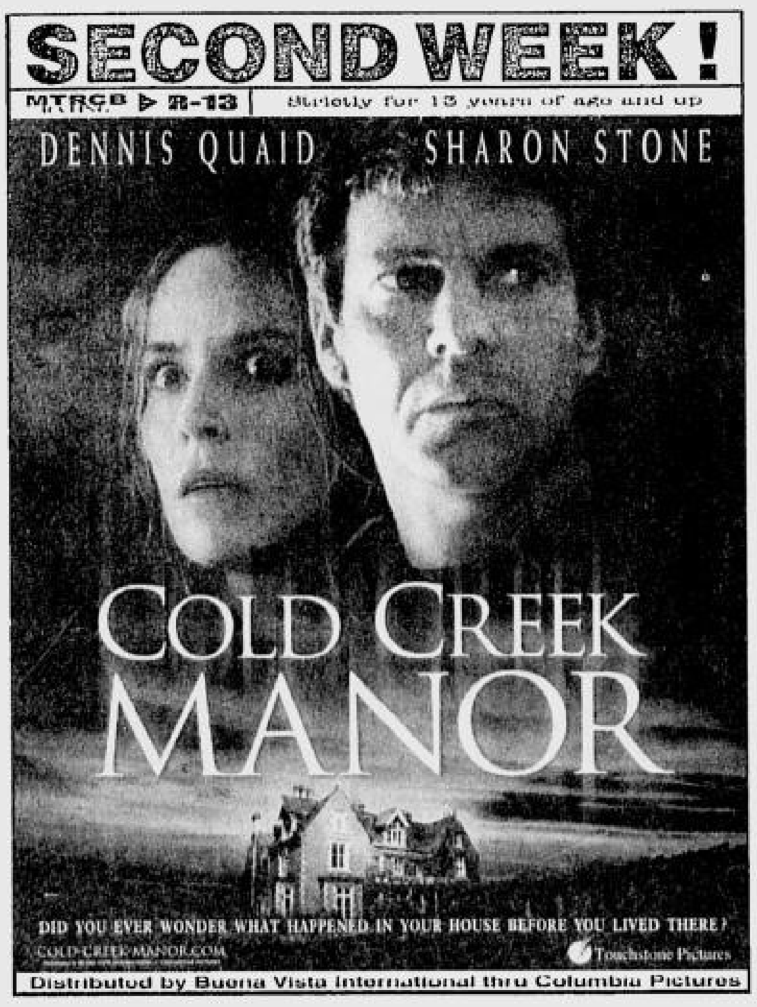
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Broadway shows get good reviews

NEW YORK—What's this? Is that a little bit of sun peeking out from behind the clouds of doom and gloom that have enveloped Broadway this season?

Adaptation

After a disappointing October and much of November, the New York theater has seen, in less than a week, the best reviewed shows of the fall: an adaptation of Shakespeare's "Henry IV," starring a rapturously received Kevin Kline, and a revival of "Wonderful Town," the Bernstein-Comden and Green musical, with the equally acclaimed Donna Murphy.

And their critical approval has been met with an equally warm response at the box office.

"Wonderful Town" arrived on Broadway with a meager advance and plagued by the cancellation of preview performances after Murphy came down with the flu. It played only eight previews before opening because producer Barry Weissler wanted to open the musical before the lucrative Thanksgiving holiday weekend. His gamble paid off.

The show grossed $400,000 last week the day after the favorable reviews came out.

Press

"My feeling is that the public always decides what is a hit and what is a flop," Weissler said. "Certainly the press helps. In the case of 'Wonderful Town,' it's been an enormous help. I don't think we could have done it without good reviews."

And we haven't even gotten to the last two Broadway productions before Christmas—"I Am My Own Wife," which was a hit last summer off-Broadway. The play, about a German transvestite who survived both the Nazi and Communist regimes, opened Dec. 3.

KLINE. Rapturously received.

And there is one more big musical to go: "Never Gonna Dance," loosely based on the Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers film and using a cavalcade of music by Jerome Kern.

Still, it hasn't been a fun fall for performers such as Jackie Mason, Farrah Fawcett, Polly Bergen, Mark Hamill and Ellen Burstyn. All were in shows that were panned and closed rapidly. In Fawcett's case, the show never got past preview performances to opening night.

Risky process

"Producing theater is always a risky process, and what's terrific is how many different people are taking that risk," said Howard Sherman, executive director of the American Theater Wing, co-presenter of the Tonys.

"What we're seeing right now is a fortuitously busy fall, something that we have not seen in a while, so, within that, where the chips fall is going to be variable."

There were the tabloid tribulations of Rosie O'Donnell, whose $10 million production of the Boy George musical, "Taboo," got bad press even before it opened. The reviews were tepid, although many critics thought it wasn't the out-and-out disaster some had predicted.

Unscathed

Hugh Jackman emerged unscathed, but his musical, "The Boy From Oz," did not. Yet the show has been grossing over $800,000 a week. Also doing hefty business is "Wicked," the $14 million musical about the witches from "The Wizard of Oz."

One of the glummest theater events of the fall occurred in Washington, where "Bounce," the first new Stephen Sondheim musical in 10 years, folded Nov. 16 at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, without booking a New York opening. AP

Amy Pascal named most powerful woman in Hollywood

By Sue Zeidler

LOS ANGELES—Amy Pascal, co-chairman of Sony Pictures, was named Hollywood's most powerful woman on Tuesday—thanks in part to the popularity of a male superhero and other box office superhits.

Sequel

Pascal, who gave the go-ahead to produce the 2002 mega-hit, "Spider-Man," and is now preparing for its sequel, led Hollywood Reporter's top 100 women in Hollywood list.

"Not only has the studio hit the $5 billion mark globally for the second straight year, but the filmmaking risks Amy Pascal takes often translate into box office success, which is a great barometer for power in Hollywood," said Christy Grosz, editor of the Women in Entertainment Power 100 issue.

Pascal, 45, became one of three co-chairmen at Sony Corp.'s Sony Pictures Entertainment this year following the departure of longtime chairman John Calley.

Pascal, who also heads Sony unit Columbia Pictures, this year oversaw such films as "Anger Management," "Daddy Day Care" and "Bad Boys 2," as well as quirkier films like "Big Fish."

Heads of various movie and television studios comprised the rest of the top 10 spots on the list.

Top spot

Pascal rose from No. 3 last year, when Sherry Lansing, chairman of the Motion Picture Group at Viacom Inc.'s Paramount Pictures, claimed the top spot.

Lansing fell to No. 4 this year, while Vivendi Universal's Universal Pictures chairman Stacey Snider ranked No. 2.

Among others in the top 10 were Oprah Winfrey (6); Susan Lyne, president of Walt Disney Co.'s ABC Entertainment (8); Nancy Tellem, president of Viacom's CBS Entertainment (3); and Judy McGrath, president of Viacom's MTV Networks' Music Group (10).

But while women apparently rock in Hollywood, the embattled music industry could use more of a female touch.

The first entry from a recording company was Michele Anthony, executive vice president of Sony Music Entertainment, who ranked No. 12.

Anthony slipped from No. 5 last year, while Hilary Rosen, the outspoken former chief executive of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) ranked No. 10.

Sagging sales

Rosen resigned this year and was replaced by a man. The industry overall is in turmoil due to sagging sales, rampant online piracy and various mergers.

"We focus mainly on the product of Hollywood, but certainly the music industry's downturn and immense changes had something to do with the ranking," said Grosz.

While female music executives were scarce, the list for the first time boasted someone from the video gaming industry.

In another nod to Pascal, Kathy Vrabeck, president of global publishing and brand management at video game company, Activision Inc., ranked 100th on the list, because she licensed the video game rights to "Spider-Man," bringing in more than $616 million in revenue to her division in 2002.

Ranking

The show business trade newspaper began ranking the 50 most powerful women 11 years ago and expanded it to include 100 women two years ago.

As it has in the past few years, the list also went beyond industry executives and insiders, to include stars like Julia Roberts (13) and Madonna (67), "Harry Potter" author J.K. Rowling (55) and Screen Actors Guild president Melissa Gilbert (89).

Seventeen-year-old media twin tycoons Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen made it for the third year running, rising to No. 84 from No. 98 last year. *Reuters*

Andrea Bocelli performs in first Chinese concert

SHANGHAI, China—Making his first trip to China, Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli called Monday for more cultural exchanges as a way of boosting understanding among people.

Events

Events such as his Shanghai visit are "good for music, good for culture and good for people," said Bocelli, who performed on Wednesday night at Shanghai's landmark Grand Theater.

"Especially at this time, when the world is so tense and things are so unstable, increasing these sorts of exchanges has special significance for better mutual understanding," Bocelli said.

Bocelli was blinded by illness at age 12.

Appearances

Bocelli, who has sold more than 80 million compact discs worldwide, has added a series of Asian concerts to his crowded touring schedule.

Bocelli is the latest in a string of international performers to visit China's biggest and wealthiest city. Previous weeks have seen concerts by pop singer Mariah Carey and Ireland's Riverdance. *AP*

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MAYBE IT'S MAYBELLINE.

Not-so-silent nights with Gentxt

PROMO

Dec 5 '03 - Feb 29 '04 **Gentxt Informatics IT Promo**
Give your IT career a head start via Gentxt.

PROMO MECHANICS

1. All Globe Gentxters are entitled to a discount equivalent to FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P500.00), for every Informatics I.T. Training Short Course enrolled in any participating Informatics Center nationwide.
2. To avail of the discount, the Globe Gentxt member must present his or her Globe Gentxt Card or E-Card (SMS from 2277), Globe Handyphone and one (1) valid ID upon enrollment.
3. Should the Gentxt member enroll in more than one (1) course, a P500.00 discount will be given for each enrolled course. However, this discount given, if more than one, cannot be combined and applied only in one (1) course.
4. The Gentxt-Informatics Promo will neither be valid with any other Informatics promotions and special offers nor can it be availed of together with Informatics Gift Certificates.
5. This promotion covers all modes of payment made to Informatics.
6. The Gentxt-Informatics Promo shall run from December 5, 2003 to February 29, 2004. See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 5142 Series of 2003

INFORMATICS

ENTERTAINMENT

Dec 3&18 **Break It!**
Gentxt takes hip hop to a new level in this inter-school dance competition.
Elimination Rounds
Dec. 3 UP Diliman & Adamson University
Dec. 18 St. Paul Manila

Dec 5&6 10am-9pm **MTV Youth Fair @ Glorietta Activity Center**
Experience the latest in sports, fashion and entertainment in one Planet Youth!
Dec. 5 (7pm): Gentxt Jams featuring Rivermaya, True Faith, K247 and Jay-R
Dec. 6 (7pm): Gentxt Vibes featuring DJ Steve Mills
*Gentxters who visit the Gentxt Planet get special freebies.

Dec 6&13 Sat 9pm **Gentxt Nights @ Dish, Rockwell Power Plant**
Move to the Gentxt groove in our weekly concerts.
Dec. 6 South Border, Overtone & 604 with Legatto
Dec. 13 South Border, Overdrive & 604 with Legatto
*Flash your Gentxt card, Globe Handyphone and a valid I.D. to get free entrance and a free drink; VIP area for the first 100 Gentxters.

Dec 12, 19 20 & 22 9pm **Backburner featuring DJ Ricky Stone**
DJ Ricky Stone returns to Manila for more Gentxt-approved musical mayhem.
Dec 12 (Fri): Olive, Makati
Dec 19 (Fri): Temple, Makati
Dec 20 (Sat): Basement, Eastwood
Dec 22 (Mon): Altitude Bar, Tomas Morato
*First 100 Gentxters to flash their Gentxt card, Globe Handyphone and a valid I.D. at the venue get free entrance.

Dec 17 Wed 7pm **Lord Of The Rings 3: Return of the King @ Robinson's Galleria Cinema 2 and Glorietta 4**
Gentxt presents the long-awaited final installment of the LOTR trilogy.
*First 400 Gentxters on each venue to flash their Gentxt card, Globe Handyphone and a valid I.D. at the venue at 5pm get one free ticket each.

Dec 18 Thurs 9pm **Christmas Wave @ Dish, Rockwell Power Plant**
Featuring Nyoy Volante, Jimmy Bondoc and Arnee Hidalgo
*First 50 Gentxters to flash their Gentxt card, Globe Handyphone and a valid ID to get free entrance (VIP area) and a free drink.

Dec 20 Sat 8pm **DE-ICE @ Fort Bonifacio Global City**
Featuring Paolo Santos, Rivermaya, Jay R, Noel Cabangon, Sugar Free and Razorback
*First 200 Gentxters to flash their Gentxt card, Globe Handyphone and a valid ID to get free entrance.

SPORTS

Dec 7 Sun 6am **adidas King of the Road @ Fort Bonifacio Global City**
Test your endurance in this 10K marathon.
*First Gentxter to finish the race gets a special prize.

Dec 14 Sun 7am **Brittany Cross-Country Mountain Bike Challenge @Portofino, Alabang**
The most exciting off-road event this season!
* Flash your Gentxt card or E-card (SMS from 2277) and get freebies.

B 1 of US! Text JOIN to 2277

Gentxt membership is open to all Globe subscribers 13 years old and up. You will receive a text message confirming your membership upon application. You can use this to avail of Gentxt privileges until your Gentxt card arrives. Your membership is valid as long as you remain a Globe subscriber. All Gentxt applications will be charged a one-time membership fee of P50 which will be deducted from prepaid credits or charged to bill for postpaid accounts. Visit www.gentxt.com.ph

'tis the season to make great things possible Globe

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SATURDAY Special

TOMAS. SRO business.

Three comediennes chase political blues away

VALDES. 'Feel-good' concert.

SANCHEZ. Riotous routines.

By Nestor U. Torre

FILIPINOS are feeling so miffed and stiffed these days that it's time for our best comediennes to come to the rescue. And Tessie Tomas, Mitch Valdes and Giselle Sanchez are doing just that, to boost our spirits this Christmas season:

Fourth performance

Tessie leads off with the fourth- and last-performance of her hit comedy act, "Si Teysi sa CR" at 9:30 p.m. tonight, at the Comfort Room comedy club on Jupiter st. in Makati, with Jon Santos guesting.

The show has been doing SRO business, so be sure you get your tickets early. "Si Teysi sa CR" is popular with comedy buffs because of its varied mix of riotous numbers, which include political satire, impersonations of colorful public figures like GMA, Miriam and Winnie and stars like Nora, Vilma, Sharon and KC, and Tessie spoofing herself as the veddy British Mrs. Pullin.

Other numbers hark back to Tessie's Bonnie Buendia days, now updated to the Viva Hot Babes, and presidential daughters Imee and Kris trading pointed witticisms with each other. If you don't laugh yourself silly, consult your shrink.

No venom

For her part, Mitch returns to the concert scene with "Mitch Valdes Rocks and Rules" at Onstage, Greenbelt 1 at 9 p.m. on Dec. 18, again with Jon Santos as special guest.

Mitch is staging a "feel-good" concert to chase the political blues and rancor away. She further describes her show: "No politics, no venom. I personally need to take a break from our headlines.

"Although I'm still very much concerned about and involved in our national and social issues, this show will be more inward and personal. With more music! My spoofs and commentaries will be more about our Pinoy music scene—then and now, since I've been around! Plus digs at Pinoy tastes re show biz.

"I don't want to think of Pinoy politics this early. It leads to violent thoughts and fantasies! —And that's not so good for the Christmas-spirit. So, let's just relax and have fun."

That sounds real good to us! Call 891-5610.

Date with the stork

Rounding out our troika of really funny ladies is Giselle Sanchez, who's just had a date with the stork—but sure doesn't look it: No stretch marks, and she swears she gained only two pounds during her pregnancy!

The young comedienne is back to hosting, singing and making people laugh at her riotous stand-up comedy routines.

An expat who's a new Giselle Sanchez fan compliments her for having "the ability to reach out to her audience in a way that makes you feel that you are the only person in the room.

"Before she performed, she told us, 'You paid good money, so you are going to get the best I have.' She surely did just that!"

Get in touch with Giselle at www.gisellesanchez.com. She answers email, promise!

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ROCKWELL
POWER PLANT CINEMA TICKETS

PROMO MECHANICS:

- THE PROMO SHALL RUN FROM OCTOBER 27, 2003 UNTIL FEBRUARY 29, 2004.
- THE PROMO IS OPEN TO ALL ADDICT MOBILE SUBSCRIBERS.
- INDIVIDUALS WHO SIGN UP WITH ADDICT MOBILE FROM OCTOBER 27, 2003 UNTIL FEBRUARY 29, 2004 WILL AUTOMATICALLY GET A CERTAIN NUMBER OF RAFFLE ENTRIES DEPENDING UPON THE PLAN THAT THEY SUBSCRIBED TO (PLAN 800 = 1 ELECTRONIC RAFFLE ENTRY, PLAN 1335 = 3, PLAN 1995 = 6, PLAN 2665 = 12, PLAN 3500 = 24). CUT-OFF DATE TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR BONUS RAFFLE ENTRIES GIVEN TO NEW SUBSCRIBERS WILL BE ON DECEMBER 21, 2003 AT 11:59PM (FOR THE FIRST DRAW), AND ON FEBRUARY 19, 2004 AT 11:59PM (FOR THE SECOND DRAW).
- INDIVIDUALS UNDER A CORPORATE ACCOUNT IN ADDICT MOBILE ARE ALSO ELIGIBLE TO JOIN. WINNERS WHO ARE UNDER THIS ACCOUNT WILL HAVE TO CLEAR WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE COMPANY'S POLICIES GOVERNING SUCH INCIDENTS.
- FOR EVERY TWO (2) MMS TRANSACTIONS (DOWNLOADING AND/OR FORWARDING OF MMS), THE SUBSCRIBER AUTOMATICALLY GETS 1 ELECTRONIC RAFFLE COUPON. THE MORE MMS TRANSACTIONS, THE MORE CHANCES OF WINNING.
- THERE WILL BE TWO (2) GRAND DRAWS:
  JANUARY 2, 2004.
  CUT-OFF FOR FIRST DRAW: 11:59PM DECEMBER 31, 2003.
  MARCH 15, 2004.
  CUT OFF FOR SECOND DRAW: 11:59PM FEBRUARY 29, 2004.
- WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED THROUGH REGISTERED MAIL AND THEIR NAMES WILL BE PUBLISHED IN LOCAL BROADSHEETS.
- ALL RAFFLE ENTRIES SHALL BE DISCARDED AFTER THE 1ST GRAND DRAW.
- EMPLOYEES OF SMART COMMUNICATIONS, INC., ITS ADVERTISING AGENCIES AND PARTICIPATING OUTLETS INCLUDING THEIR RELATIVES UP TO SECOND DEGREE OF CONSANGUINITY OR AFFINITY ARE DISQUALIFIED FROM JOINING THIS PROMO.
- PRIZES ARE NON-CONVERTIBLE TO CASH. TUASON RACING SCHOLARSHIP IS TRANSFERABLE.
- A PARTICIPANT CAN WIN THE GRAND PRIZE ONLY ONCE. IF A NAME WINS MORE THAN ONCE, HE GETS THE BIGGER PRIZE. INDIVIDUAL CAN WIN AS MANY TIMES IN THE WEEKLY DRAW.
- REDEMPTION PERIOD SHALL BE WITHIN 60 DAYS FROM NOTIFICATION.
- GRAND PRIZES CAN BE CLAIMED AT 6799 SMART TOWER, AYALA AVE., MAKATI CITY. WEEKLY PRIZES CAN BE CLAIMED AT THE SMART WIRELESS CENTERS SPECIFIED IN THE REGISTERED NOTICE.
- WINNERS MUST PRESENT BILLING STATEMENT, VALID ID AND REGISTERED NOTICE.
- PRIZES ARE TAX FREE.

*SONY ERICSSON HANDSETS DO NOT COME WITH A PLAN.
*ROCKWELL MOVIE TICKETS ARE VALID FOR 90 DAYS FROM DATE OF ISSUE.
*ROCKWELL MOVIE TICKETS AND GOLD'S GYM 30-DAY PASSES ARE ONLY FOR METRO MANILA WINNERS.

GRAND DRAWS:
1ST DRAW: JANUARY 2, 2004:
(2 MINI COOPERS/ 1 DUCATI SUPERBIKE/ 45 GOLD'S GYM 30-DAY PASSES/ 2 SONY ERICSSON T-610'S AND 2 SONY ERICSSON Z-600'S / 4 TRS CLASSES).

2ND DRAW: MARCH 15, 2004:
(2 MINI COOPERS/ 1 DUCATI SUPERBIKE/ 45 GOLD'S GYM 30-DAY PASSES/ 2 SONY ERICSSON T-610'S AND 2 SONY ERICSSON Z-600'S / 4 TRS CLASSES).

WEEKLY DRAWS (18):
50 POWER PLANT MOVIE TICKETS
5 GOLD'S GYM 30-DAY PASSES
5 ADDICT MOBILE JACKETS
5 ADDICT MOBILE BAGS
10 ADDICT MOBILE SHIRTS
10 ADDICT MOBILE CAPS

- WEEKLY DRAW TO BE HELD EVERY FRIDAY, STARTING OCTOBER 31, 2003 UNTIL FEBRUARY 27, 2004 AT 4PM AT THE 11TH FLR., 6799 SMART TOWER, AYALA AVENUE, MAKATI CITY.

Actual unit may vary from photo.

For more info, text "INFO" to 700-ADDICT (233428).
P2.50 for every info received.

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For questions, comments or concerns, you may call the SMART Hotline at 888-1111, *888 using your SMART cellphone, the SMART Corporate Hotline at #888, send a text message to 888 (P1.00 per message sent in excess of the FREE TEXT allocation), e-mail us at addictmobile@smart.com.ph, or visit the SMART Wireless Center nearest you.

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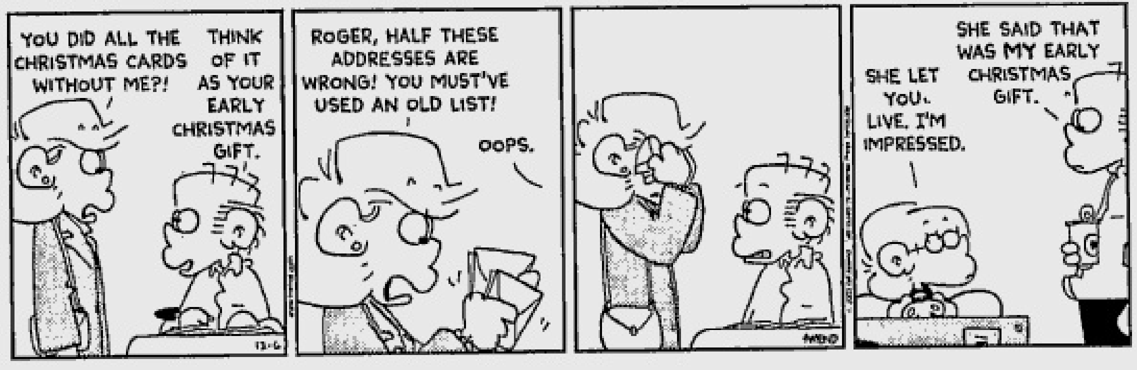
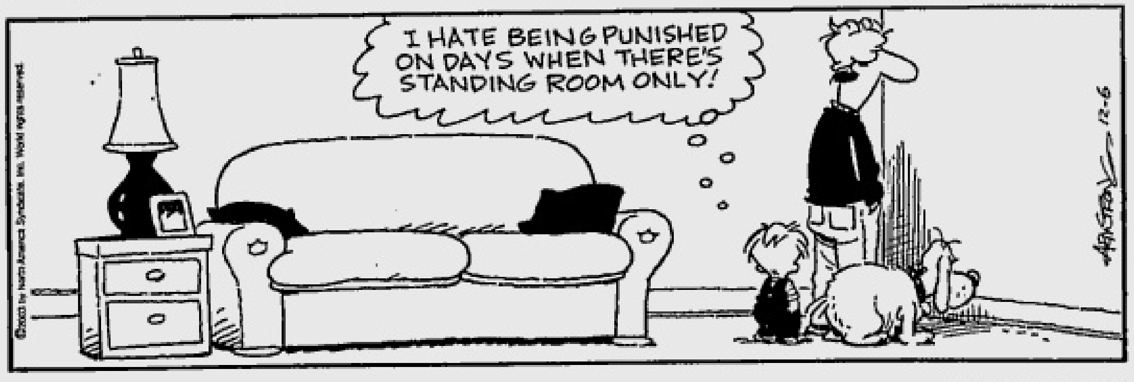
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


YOU DID ALL THE CHRISTMAS CARDS WITHOUT ME?!
THINK OF IT AS YOUR EARLY CHRISTMAS GIFT.
ROGER, HALF THESE ADDRESSES ARE WRONG! YOU MUST'VE USED AN OLD LIST!
OOPS.
SHE LET YOU LIVE. I'M IMPRESSED.
SHE SAID THAT WAS MY EARLY CHRISTMAS GIFT.
12-6
AMEND

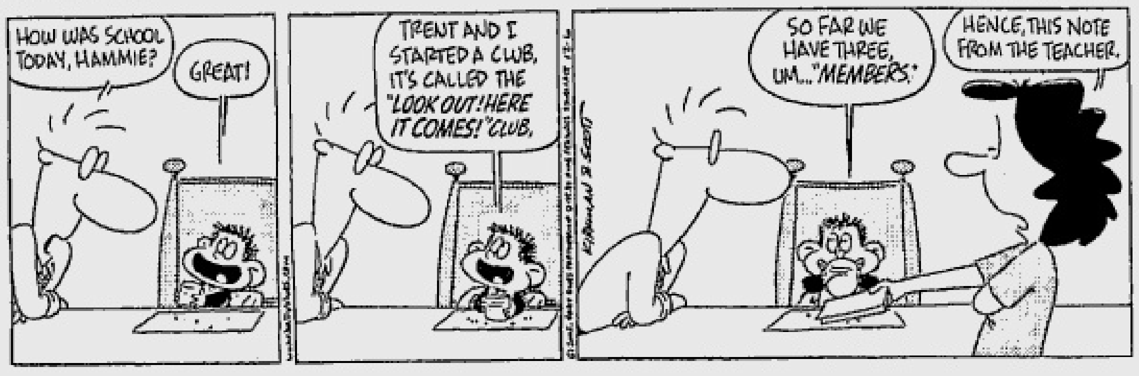
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I HATE BEING PUNISHED ON DAYS WHEN THERE'S STANDING ROOM ONLY!
12-6
ARMSTRONG

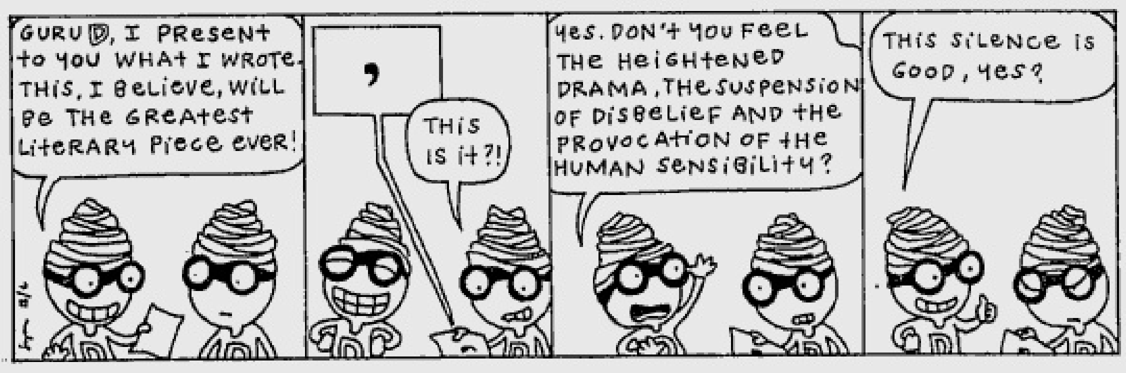
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HOW WAS SCHOOL TODAY, HAMMIE?
GREAT!
TRENT AND I STARTED A CLUB. IT'S CALLED THE "LOOK OUT! HERE IT COMES!" CLUB.
SO FAR WE HAVE THREE, UM..."MEMBERS."
HENCE, THIS NOTE FROM THE TEACHER.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


GURU D, I PRESENT TO YOU WHAT I WROTE. THIS, I BELIEVE, WILL BE THE GREATEST LITERARY PIECE EVER!
,
THIS IS IT?!
YES. DON'T YOU FEEL THE HEIGHTENED DRAMA, THE SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF AND THE PROVOCATION OF THE HUMAN SENSIBILITY?
THIS SILENCE IS GOOD, YES?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are extremely resourceful. You know how to make the best of what you have. You also have a talent for seeing potential in someone or something. You're practical and have organizational know-how. You have high expectations of yourself and others. Expect increased socializing in a lighthearted way in the year ahead.

Birthdate of: Agnes Moorehead, actress; Janine Turner, actress; Lindsay Price, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Definitely do not throw your weight around with authority figures or parents today. There is a conflict between your sense of duty and your desire to do what you want. Chill out.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You are too worried about something today. Remember the saying: Worry is like a rocking chair; it gives you something to do but gets you nowhere.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You might be disappointed at your share of something that is divided today. Somehow you have to pay your dues. (This kind of thing just comes and goes.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Relationships with others might feel strained today. Don't take these feelings seriously; this is a passing dark cloud on your horizon. (Here today, gone tomorrow.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): It's not that easy to get cooperation from co-workers today. Don't fret about this. People are caught up in their own worlds today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might feel lonely or out of the loop today. Everybody gets days like this. It's just how the cookie crumbles. This feeling will be gone by tomorrow.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You might feel like the world is passing you by. You feel colorless in a vibrant scene. It's simply that it's difficult to appreciate who you are today. Don't worry about it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Relations with daily colleagues and siblings could be strained today. This is not your fault. Everyone is a tad hypercritical and withdrawn today.

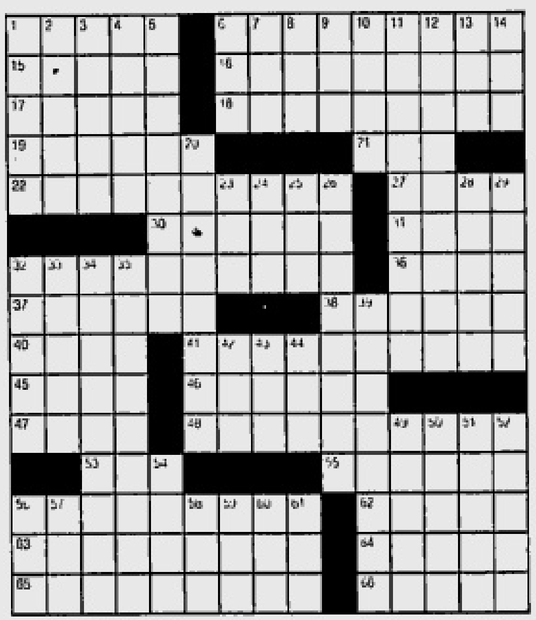
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Financial worries might make you feel anxious today. (Already, there's too much month left at the end of the money.) Don't worry, because your career is blessed this year.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): It's probably better to work alone today rather than demand too much of partners and friends. You can't pretend to have feelings that you don't feel. Today, you prefer to do your own thing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You often feel intellectually lonely. That's because you're very bright and have a unique way of looking at things. Today is definitely one of those days.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Relations with friends might be strained or difficult today. Don't expect too much of others. Be patient and just go with the flow. Don't feel sorry for yourself. (Everybody feels a bit lonely today.)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Josiah Breward
Scranton, PA

12/6/03

ACROSS
1 Staircase
6 Bird of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"
15 One of Chicago's airports
16 Breach of good taste
17 Deadly
18 Stubborn as a mule
19 Brookner and Loos
21 Clique
22 Evening of one's days
27 Valhalla crowd
30 Tavern
31 Type of rug or code
32 Visualizations
36 Pickling herb
37 Flat-bottomed fishing boats
38 Bring into being
40 Describe
41 1991 Masters winner
45 __ go bragh!
46 Indian and Arctic
47 Lucy's spouse
48 CNN employee
53 Hanoi holiday
55 Lead on
56 Of belief in Mother Nature
62 Clavell novel, "__ House"
63 Hometown success
64 Opera highlights
65 Added sugar to
66 Ocean ray

DOWN
1 Chesterfields
2 Macbeth's title
3 Dine at home
4 Chatter
5 Former Ethiopian ruler
6 Past
7 Sci. class
8 Clear dishes
9 False front
10 The one here
11 Turncoats
12 Secular priest
13 Make a lap
14 Visualize
20 Analysis of verse into metrical patterns
23 Bulldog of Connecticut
24 __ compos mentis
25 Gear tooth
26 Settle in securely
28 Epsilon preceder
29 Hawthorne's birthplace
32 Wasted time
33 Watered fabric
34 Truce
35 Federal financial agency
39 Arquette and others
42 Top trump
43 Just out
44 How __ I to know?
49 Bundle-of-joy bird
50 Shinbone
51 Dazzling display
52 "Touched by an Angel" star
54 Pinball error
56 Kaline and Jolson
57 At the moment
58 That lady
59 X rating?
60 Wrath
61 Massachusetts cape

Friday's Puzzle Solved

S	C	A	R	■	G	R	A	D	■	C	U	P	I	D
C	A	N	E	■	R	A	R	A	■	A	P	A	C	E
R	I	G	S	■	A	V	E	C	■	S	T	R	E	W
I	N	L	A	N	D	I	S	H	■	T	R	E	S	S
P	E	E	W	E	E	■	■	A	R	L	O	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	D	R	A	G	■	S	E	D	G	E	S
S	C	A	D	S	■	S	H	I	V	■	D	A	R	E
P	O	L	O	■	S	T	O	O	P	■	E	P	I	C
A	V	O	W	■	L	O	U	T	■	O	N	S	E	T
S	E	E	N	T	O	■	L	A	I	R	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	S	E	E	P	■	■	R	E	C	E	D	E
M	A	N	T	A	■	O	U	T	V	O	L	V	E	D
A	R	E	A	S	■	E	T	U	I	■	A	O	N	E
S	N	A	R	E	■	M	A	N	N	■	S	K	I	N
S	O	R	T	S	■	S	H	A	G	■	H	E	M	S

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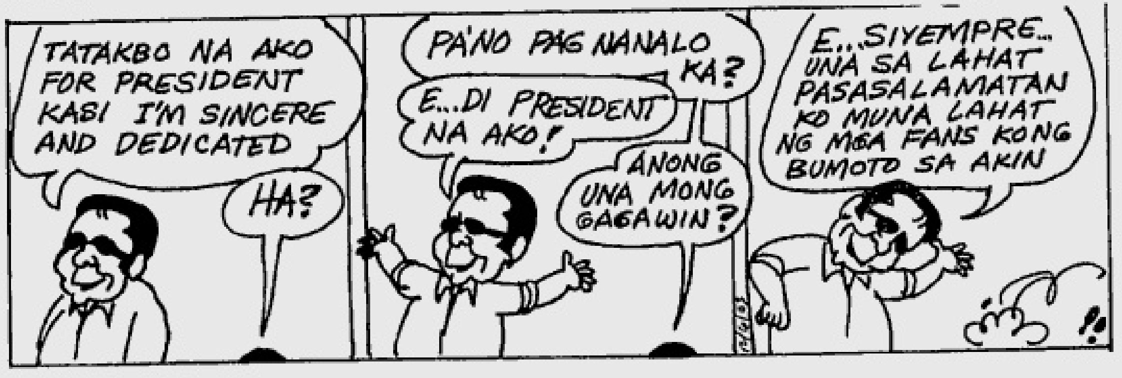
12/5/03

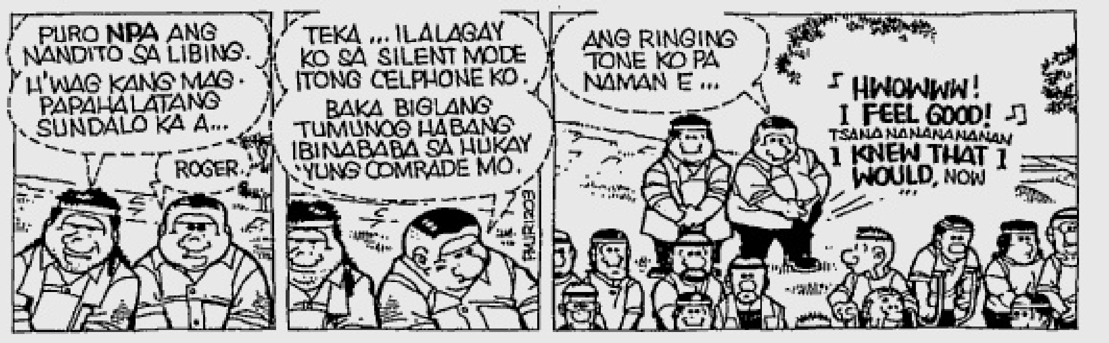
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


TATAKBO NA AKO FOR PRESIDENT KASI I'M SINCERE AND DEDICATED
HA?
PA'NO PAG NANALO KA?
E...DI PRESIDENT NA AKO!
ANONG UNA MONG GAGAWIN?
E...SIYEMPRE.. UNA SA LAHAT PASASALAMATAN KO MUNA LAHAT NG MGA FANS KONG BUMOTO SA AKIN
!!

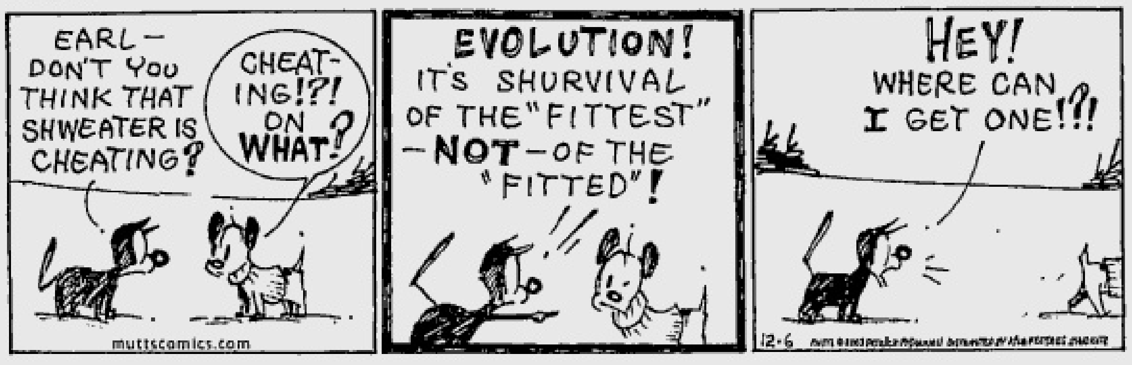
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PURO NPA ANG NANDITO SA LIBING. H'WAG KANG MAG-PAPAHALATANG SUNDALO KA A...
ROGER.
TEKA ... ILALAGAY KO SA SILENT MODE ITONG CELPHONE KO.
BAKA BIGLANG TUMUNOG HABANG IBINABABA SA HUKAY 'YUNG COMRADE MO.
ANG RINGING TONE KO PA NAMAN E ...
HWOWWW! I FEEL GOOD! TSANA NANANANANAN I KNEW THAT I WOULD, NOW ...
PMJR1203

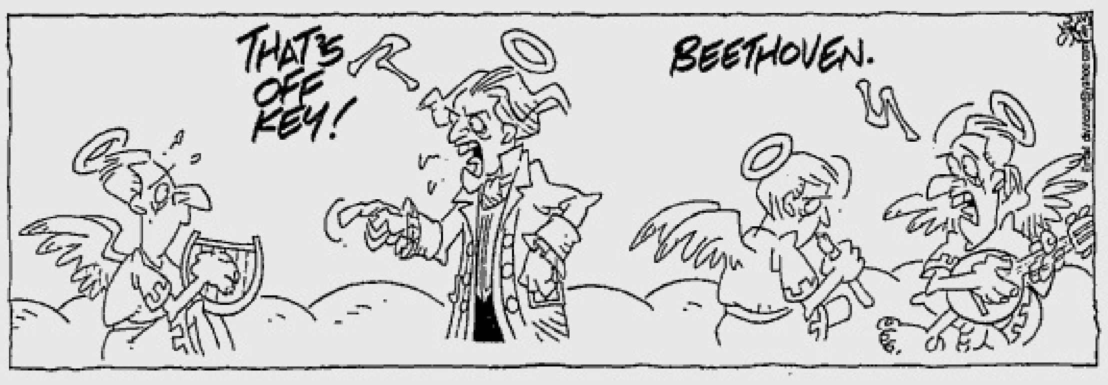
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EARL — DON'T YOU THINK THAT SHWEATER IS CHEATING?
CHEAT-ING!?! ON WHAT!?
muttscomics.com
EVOLUTION! IT'S SHURVIVAL OF THE "FITTEST" — NOT — OF THE "FITTED"!
HEY! WHERE CAN I GET ONE!?!
12-6

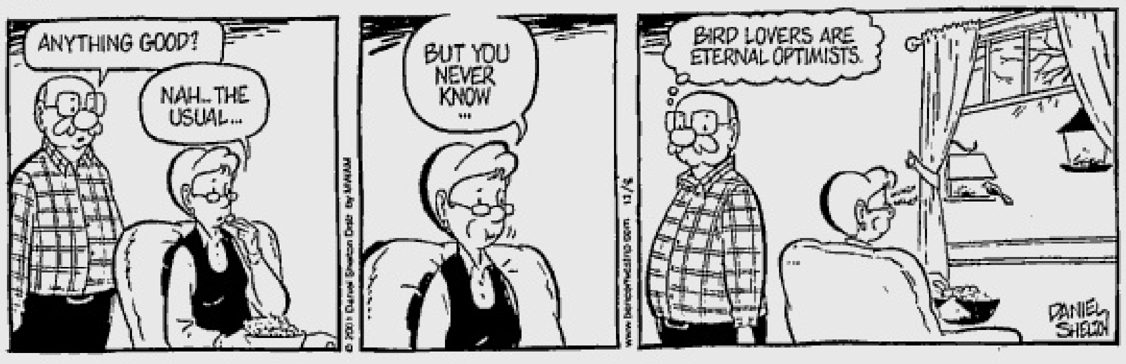
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


THAT'S OFF KEY!
BEETHOVEN.

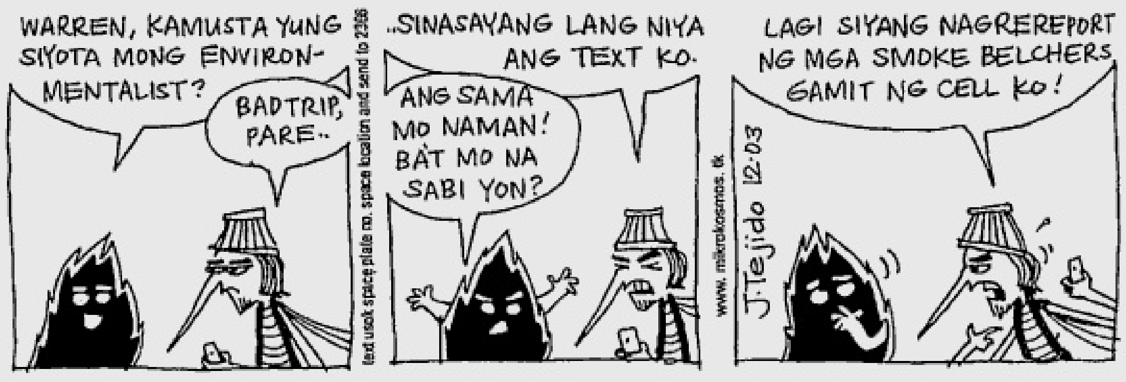
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


ANYTHING GOOD?
NAH.. THE USUAL...
BUT YOU NEVER KNOW ...
BIRD LOVERS ARE ETERNAL OPTIMISTS.
DANIEL SHELTON

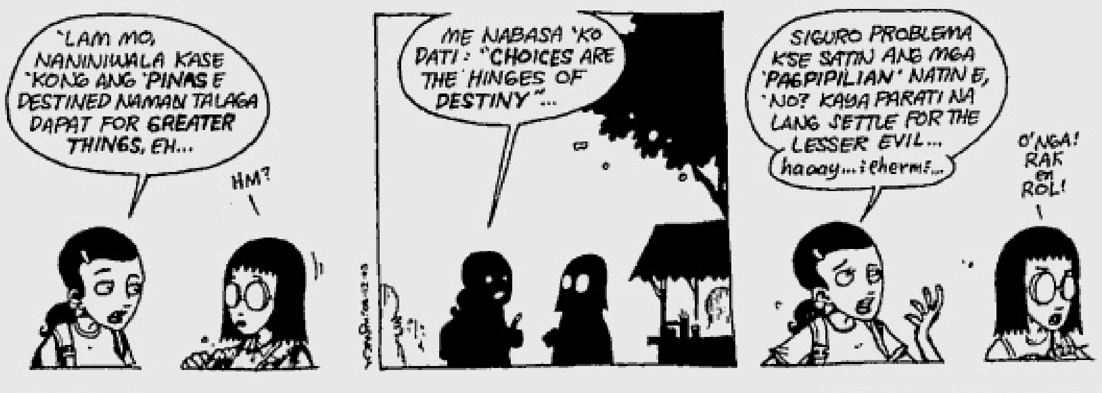
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


WARREN, KAMUSTA YUNG SIYOTA MONG ENVIRON-MENTALIST?
BADTRIP, PARE..
..SINASAYANG LANG NIYA ANG TEXT KO.
ANG SAMA MO NAMAN! BAT MO NA SABI YON?
LAGI SIYANG NAGREREPORT NG MGA SMOKE BELCHERS GAMIT NG CELL KO!
text usok space plate no. space location and send to 2366
www.mikrokosmos.tk
J.Tejido 12-03

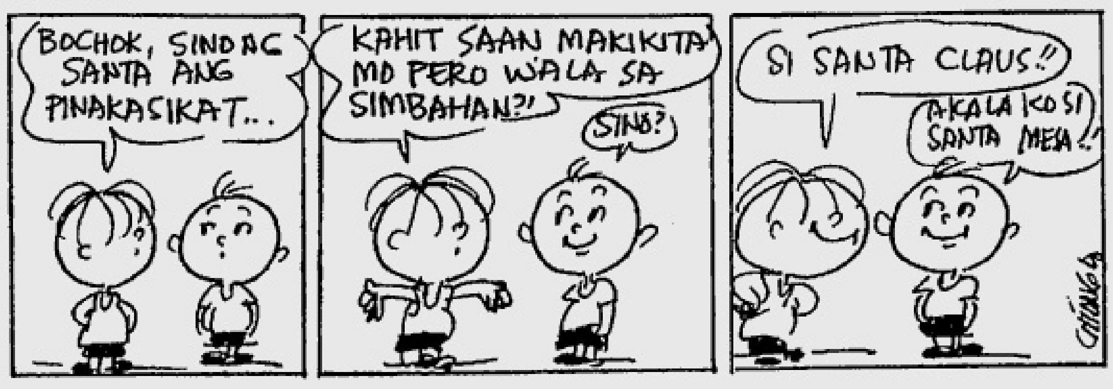
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


'LAM MO, NANINIWALA KASE 'KONG ANG 'PINAS E DESTINED NAMAN TALAGA DAPAT FOR GREATER THINGS, EH...
HM?
ME NABASA 'KO DATI: "CHOICES ARE THE HINGES OF DESTINY"...
SIGURO PROBLEMA KSE SATIN ANG MGA 'PAGPIPILIAN' NATIN E, 'NO? KAYA PARATI NA LANG SETTLE FOR THE LESSER EVIL...
haaay...¡cherm!...
O'NGA! RAK EN ROL!

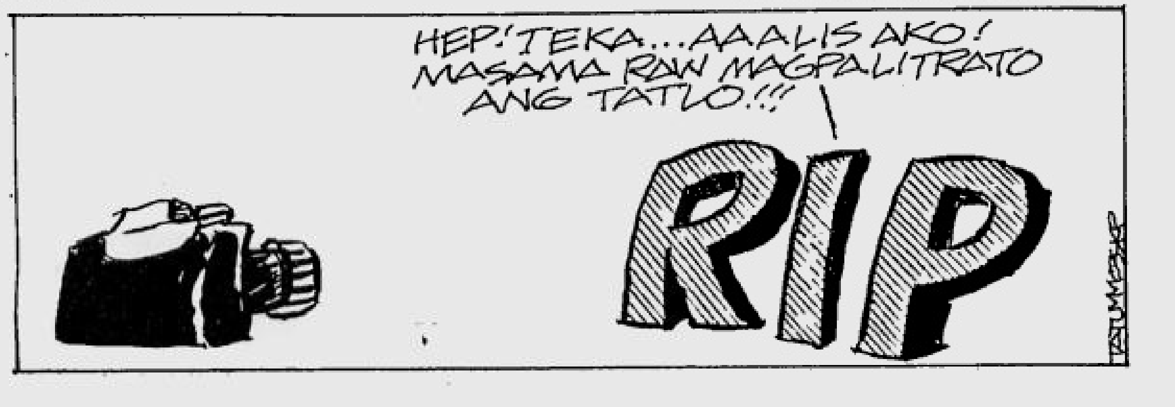
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BOCHOK, SINO AG SANTA ANG PINAKASIKAT...
KAHIT SAAN MAKIKITA MO PERO WALA SA SIMBAHAN?!
SINO?
SI SANTA CLAUS!!
AKALA KO SI SANTA MESA!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING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Veritable hodgepodge of film tastes

By Rito P. Asilo

LAST Sunday, we caught *five* movies of varying scope, quality and genre in a film-viewing marathon that was both exhausting and interesting!

It's heartening to note that theaters like SM's chain of cineplexes (as well as those in Glorietta and Greenbelt) now give foreign and "subtitled" films a fair chance at the commercial market.

Instructive

These films are instructive because they help reveal what's ailing the local industry, and expose filmgoers to current moviemaking trends in the world film market.

Two of the feature films we saw, Zhou Sun's "Zhou Yu's Train" (China) and Takashi Shimizu's "The Grudge: Ju-on" (Japan), were both shown at this year's Toronto Film Festival. A commercial run for these films here would have been close to impossible five years ago.

The other three (Peter Weir's "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World," Mike Figgis' "Cold Creek Manor" and the Warner Brothers kiddie flick, "Looney Tunes: Back in Action") were Hollywood productions, two of them from the acclaimed directors of "Gallipoli" and "Leaving Las Vegas."

Rundown

The rundown to the annual Metro Manila Filmfest is always an exhilarating period for film buffs, when moviehouses are flooded with features that are either lobbying for Oscar honors, or flicks whose producers know that they are so bad that they settle for humdrum pre-Christmas playdates.

While it is a delight to see the ethereal Gong Li ("Farewell My Concubine," "Raise the Red Lantern," "Ju Dou") back on the big screen, her undeniable screen presence is not enough to save "Zhou Yu's Train," a "misfire" from the director of "Breaking the Silence"—which is a pity, because the film has noble intentions.

Twice a week, Zhou Yu (Gong Li), a ceramics artisan, takes a long train ride to be with her lover, Chen Ching (Tony Leung), a poet who sweeps Zhou off her feet with romantic verses. Then, on one of her train journeys, she meets a veterinarian who intrigues her, and begins an affair with him. She is naturally torn between the two men.

Visual flair

The director has a visual flair that works quite well for awhile, and some of his images are dreamlike and poetic—until redundance rears its head, and the beauty of those images wears off.

In stories like this, a director has to know how to tip the balance between keeping the narrative interesting and making his images work for and not against his film. It's also frustrating to see characters dive into problematic situations that don't need a shrink to figure out.

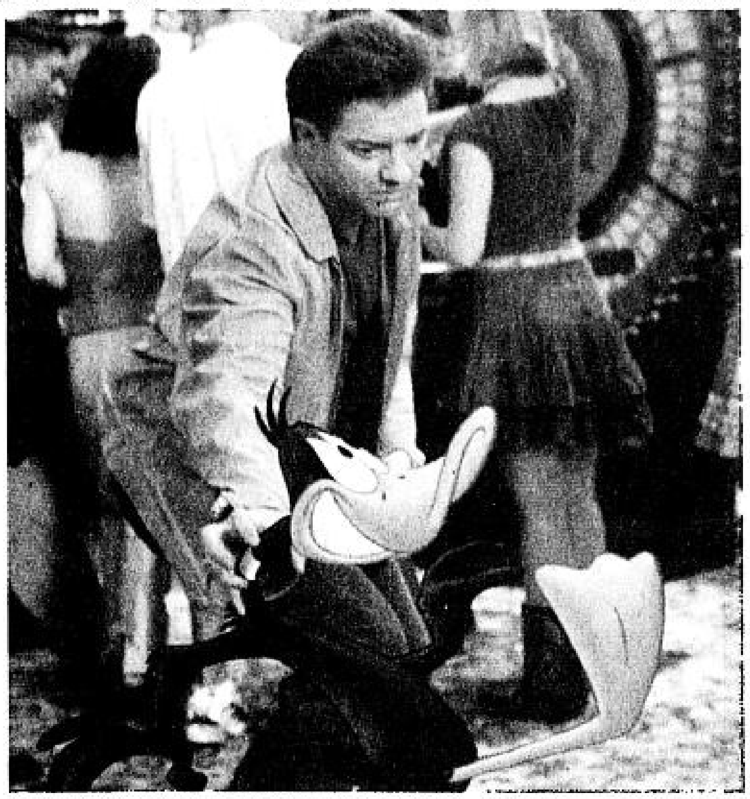
We wonder why some actors lose their edge when they break their ties with directors who "create" them. Aside from Gong Li, who had a not-so-amicable separation from Zhang Yimou, we can also think of Antonio Banderas and Pedro Almodovar—or, more classically, Toshiro Mifune and Akira Kurosawa.

To be fair, Li has managed to appear in good films (Chen Kaige's "Temptress Moon," Wayne Wang's "Chinese Box") after she severed her ties with Yimou, but the effect just wasn't the same.

Let's hope she does better with the upcoming "Eros," directed by—hold your breath!—Michaelangelo Antonioni, Steven Soderbergh and Wong Kar Wai (with art direction by Pedro Almodovar).

Characters

You don't watch "Looney Tunes: Back in Action" expecting to see Academy Award nominations. Just relax and enjoy the characters that we grew up rooting for and loving, and hope that the movie isn't as idiotic as "Deuce Bigalow" or "Little Nicky." The good news is, it's not. It's even better than "Space Jam"! *(To be concluded)*



"LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION." Characters we grew up rooting for and loving.

What would local TV do without birthdays?

By Nestor U. Torre

PRACTICALLY everytime we watch a variety show on TV, the program ends with an *asalto* for one of its hosts on his birthday. Some daily shows even celebrate their main host's birthday for an entire week, and weekly shows do the same for an entire month!

Scenario

The scenario is pretty much the same: The celebrant is "surprised" with cakes, flowers, meaningful or "naughty" presents, kisses and felicitations from relatives—not to mention colleagues, significant others, fans, his teacher in Grade Two, *barkada* in high school, parents calling via long distance from the States—etc!

The idea is to show the celebrity celebrant how much he's loved. The display of emotion is so overwhelming that the birthday boy or girl invariably breaks down in a flood of "happy tears," and the production people behind the cameras beam because they know they've struck ratings gold with their "emotional blackmail" once more.

In fact, the birthday ploy has become so popular that one show can feature two or even three "surprise" celebrations in just one episode. The gimmick has been overplayed so much that it's become numbingly predictable, prompting some viewers to reflect:

Why make such a big, ritual deal about stars' birthdays on TV? Surviving another year is an achievement only if you're a nonagenarian. Your having been born is your mother's crowning glory, not yours.

On stars' birthdays, why not fete their moms instead? Their celebrity offspring are just benefiting from their good genes, that's all. Bah, humbug.

Ritual sport

—Sorry about that. Yes, we know that going ga-ga over birthdays isn't exclusive to TV people, it's a ritual sport that's cheerfully played all over the country. —Not really because we love the celebrant to bits, but because we enjoy blowouts and parties! Note that, in these parts, the celebrant is expected to foot the bill for his celebration . . .

But it's sobering to remind ourselves that the big deal about celebrity birthdays on TV is at least partly about pleasing, not just the celebrant, but also his fans. It's also an easy way to come up with "interesting" viewing fare at very little extra expense, since most of the those cakes and flowers are paid for by "exchange deals," anyway.

The last time we celebrated our birthday on TV, Rolando Tinio, now a National Artist, surprised everyone by up and planting a kiss on our kisser. Now, that gave the viewing country something to talk about! —For about two days, until even that osculatory coup was upstaged by the next controversial celebrity birthday celebration on TV.

If we recall correctly, that particular overly literal-minded birthday celebrant took all of his clothes off because he wanted to feel "newly reborn" all over again.

—Happy Birthday!

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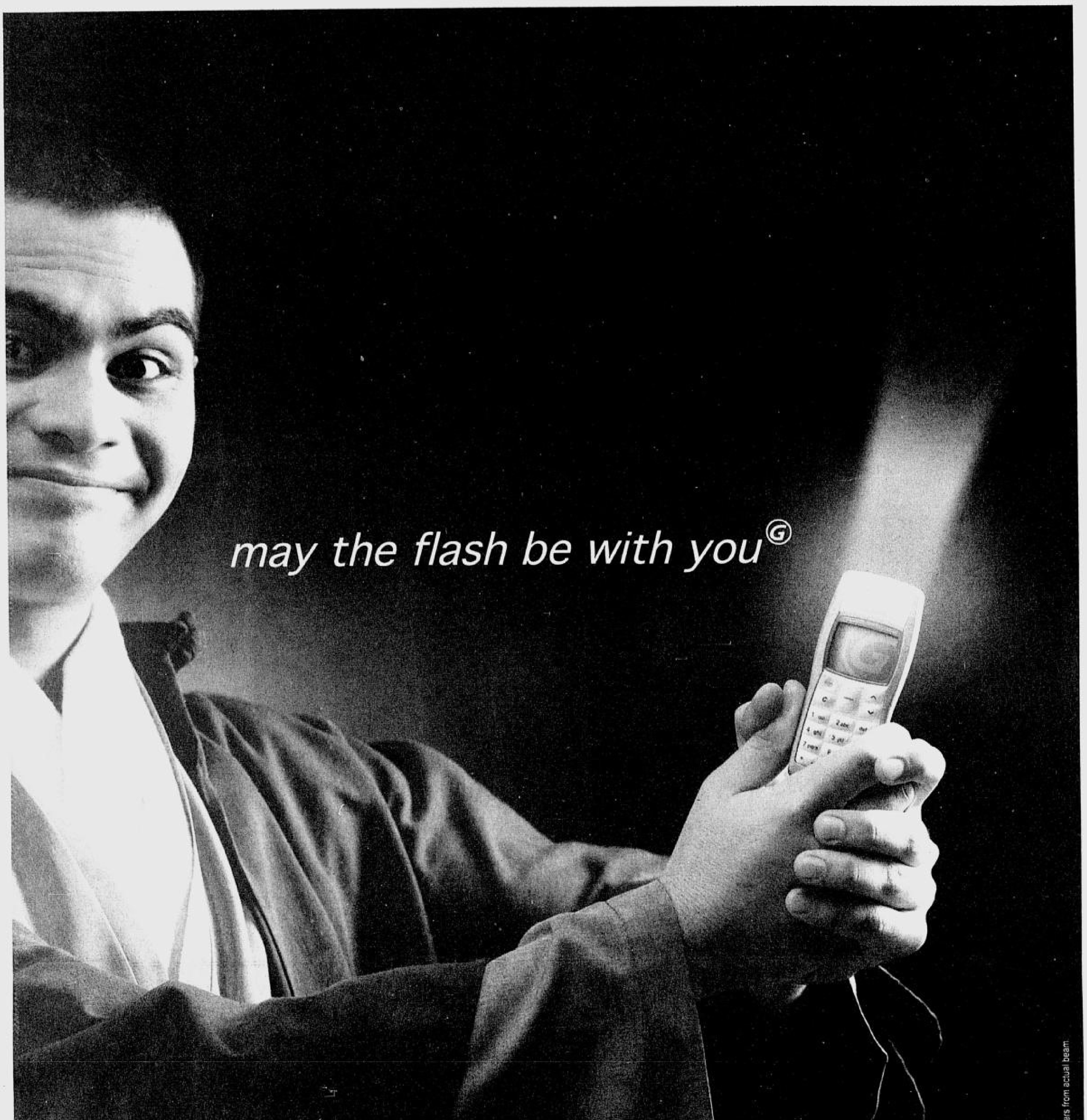
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Britney Spears in the zone with No. 1 album

SPEARS sings about her sex drive, shopping sprees and all-night partying.

NEW YORK—Britney Spears is in a zone, all right—and it's at the top of the album chart.

The pop star's sexy fourth album, "In the Zone," debuted at No. 1 with more than 609,000 copies sold in its first week, according to industry figures released Wednesday.

The disc, which contains the single "Me Against the Music" with Madonna, has received mixed reviews. It showcases an all-grown-up Britney, panting about her sex drive, her shopping sprees and her all-night partying.

Slight drop

The showing is a slight drop from the 21-year-old singer's last album, "Britney," which also debuted at No. 1 with 746,000 copies sold during its first week in November 2001. But it's less than half the sales of her second album, "Oops! . . . I Did It Again," which sold a whopping 1.3 million in its first week in May 2000.

Meanwhile, Michael Jackson's "Number Ones" debuted at No. 13. But the child molestation allegations against the singer didn't seem to hurt his sales: Jackson's album sold about 121,000 copies, which is typical for a greatest hits collection.

Another new release, the self-titled disc from Blink-182, came in at No. 3 with more than 313,000 copies sold. And the Beatles' "Let It Be . . . Naked," which strips the band's 1969 album of Phil Spector's lavish production effects, debuted at No. 5 with about 280,000 copies sold. *AP*

LAZARO. "Make a difference!"

'Probe Team' will be missed

By Jocelyn Valle

ROBERT Alejandro would have celebrated his fourth year as reporter for "The Probe Team" this month. Sadly, the pioneering TV newsmagazine aired its final episode on Channel 7 last Nov. 25, after featuring 2,242 stories in its 16 years on the air.

Friendships

"I will definitely miss the people in 'Probe,'" says Robert, who's also a designer and host of "Art Is-Kool." "We've built friendships—and it's not easy for me to make friends!"

On his first day with "Probe," Robert remembers, he was told by producer Nessa Valdellon to look like he was having a nervous breakdown.

"I thought I wasn't good enough," he recalls about his initial stab at broadcast journalism. "Then I realized that it must have been a job that God wanted me to do."

Bernadette Sembrano, a Business Administration graduate, stumbled into broadcast journalism. "There's so much to miss about 'Probe,'" she sighs. "But mostly, I'll miss the people."

Founder

Eliza Zamora agrees: "*Ibang klase ang samahan namin.*" I won't forget what Ma'am Cheche (Lazaro, "Probe's" founder) kept telling us: Make a difference."

After the final airing of "Probe," the group has been officially jobless.

But the show's staffers should continue to be involved in broadcast journalism, like the show's past "graduates," some of whom have even gone on to work abroad—like Maria Ressa (CNN's Southeast Asia bureau chief), Manny Ayala (Discovery Channel) and Marga Ortigas (CNN).

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Olivia, Gail, Jed and Mark are fulfilling their promise

By Andy P. Bais

UPCOMING talents are, for us, good subjects for interviews. Never mind if some of them are not yet very articulate. What matters (for us, at least) is, they don't give interviewers a hard time, and make scheduling a breeze.

Careers

We followed up on some of our previous subjects and we're glad that some of them are doing great in their respective careers, slowly but surely fulfilling their promise.

Last week's MetroPop grand finals featured two fine interpreters: lovely Olivia and J.Lo lookalike but vocally superior Gail Blanco.

Olivia, in tandem with RJ Rosales, sang hitmaker Vehnee Saturno's "You're All That I Live For," with all the passion she could muster. Too bad, they were up against other exceptional singers and songwriters. But in time, this young teener will surely get her reward for her outstanding performance.

Debut album

The young singer is currently working on her debut album under Viper Records, where she is a contract artist. The album is scheduled for release early next year and will include original compositions and some revivals.

Olivia still sings on Tuesday at JOG 999, a music lounge owned by singer-comedian Jograd de la Torre, where she first caught our attention.

She also sings at Astoria Hotel, Wednesday; Top of the Century, Thursday, and at Ardi's, Jupiter, Makati, Monday. Next August, she'll be the country's representative to the Russia Song Festival. Her entry is the same song that she sang in this year's MetroPop.

Gail, for her part, sang Trina Belamide's "Be There," which was composed exclusively for her. Although she didn't get the judges' nod, she nevertheless made waves with her unique style of singing and showmanship.

She has already released an album under MCA Universal, and a follow-up compilation is in the works. She busies herself with solo gigs on Monday, 9 p.m. at Aruba, Libis, QC; with the Prime Council band; at Strumms, Jupiter, Makati, Thursday; Aruba; Friday; and at Conways, Shangri-La, Makati, Saturday.

MADDELA, BLANCO AND BAUTISTA. Upcoming talents who are hitting their mark.

Another outstanding talent who is slowly getting the public's attention is Jed Maddela. This Voice of Asia winner was also recently named "Breakthrough Male Performer of the Year" by Celebrity Chronicle.

Carrier single

He is busy promoting his debut album, "I'll Be Around," for Universal Records. His carrier single, "Let Me Love You," highlights his tenor voice and the song is now a radio favorite.

His next single is his remake of Regine Velasquez' "Kung Maibabalik Ko Lang." He has a solo gig on Wednesday at Aruba, Libis, QC. He performs with Gail and the Prime Council band on other nights.

Finally, we're glad that Mark Bautista, the latest golden boy of Viva Records, is slowly making a name for himself. The "Star for a Night" finalist has just recorded his debut album, which will be out later this month.

His self-titled album has "Baliw," an upbeat love song composed by Jun Murillo, as its carrier single. The song is an entry to the Viva-sponsored Levi Celerio songwriting competition that will hold its grand finals early next year.

Mark's deep baritone and poster-boy look should propel him to the top. He will also appear in "Annie Batungbakal," a Jolina Magdangal starrer where he plays pop star Sarah Geronimo's love interest. He's currently busy with TV guestings for the album's promo.

'Tsismis' and 'intriga' run riot on television

By Behn Cervantes

YOU'D think television, being a vital medium of communication, would maximize its positive effects on viewers glued to the idiot box for hours on end. You can imagine housewives, the unemployed, and idle out-of-school youth imbibing all the dubious values TV dishes out morning, noon and night.

Shoddy and repetitive

The shows on the major channels are either shoddy or merely repetitive. There is hardly a difference because the stars of soaps, noisy noontime shows and early-evening dramas hop from one lucrative contract to another.

Often, the highest bidder acquires talents who reprise what they have already done on the other channel. That way, the "winning" ingredient in the other channel's shows is merely transferred to the winning bidder.

Therefore, we have the same predictable shows and talents aping each other in nonsense—weeping, wailing or snorting vengeance on hapless young lovers.

Sensationalism

News programs employ reporters who maximize sensationalism over newsworthiness. Therefore, they trivialize issues and give uninformed opinions on vital problems that the audience then perceives as expert.

Do we wonder why the public thinks Noli de Castro is "presidentiable?" He has been on television for so long and reads his news reports with such authority that the public thinks he is an expert on complex national issues

I cannot wait until the late-night news when the tandem of Tina Muñoz Palma and Angelo Castro Jr. provides news dispassionately and with maturity—as well as the news program hosted by Mari Kaimo. No gimmicks, no *pa*-cute antics, just pure, unadulterated news.

Otherwise, the early evening news is a circus of gimmicks and overacting. To this day, they allow suspects to be slapped and mauled by their alleged victims. Hasn't the Human Rights Commission taken note of this transgression to this day?

Acceptable traits

I also wonder why flagrant gays of the cheapest kind are allowed to make *intriga* and *tsismis* acceptable traits among Filipinos, purportedly the only Christian country in Asia.

Most of the time, this is mere hearsay. On national television yet!

Of course, you have got to wonder where the responsible television executives are. Don't they see what is going on?

Perverted

Why should gossip, for example, be made to appear like a worthwhile social practice? Or, to distort the true meaning of *intriga* by giving it glamour because some sexy star is spreading the news? There is something perverted about this shoddy use of a medium that can educate, elucidate, inform as well as entertain.

There is no *bakya* audience, there is only a bunch of profit-hungry *bakya* producers who cultivate this taste for gossip and sensationalism in the audience, make good money on it, and then blame everything on the poor, defenseless *masa*.

Need to reorder priorities on TV

By Nestor U. Torre

WE hear that the country's top advertisers and advertising companies are thinking of ways to have a positive impact on the country and its many problems—which need all the help they can get.

Heartening development

This is a heartening development, because advertisements can have a strong albeit subliminal impact, both for good or bad, on millions of viewers.

The question is, how can this laudable objective be met? We know of some advertisers who are so fed up with the irresponsible shows produced lately that they're funding their own, more positive-minded productions.

Another move is to come up with an institutional advertising campaign that will promote nation-building and values formation.

The question now is, of all of the positive values that should be encouraged, which should the campaign concentrate on and prioritize? A scattershot approach, no matter how well-intended, would never do, because it could just confuse viewers with its comucopia of values devoutly to be wished, and thus keep them from actualizing them in their own lives.

Some proponents suggest that the campaign focus on making people decide to be more vigilant and participatory in their view of government. In other words, join watchdog groups against incompetence and corruption, and don't expect government to do everything for you.

Political education

Others are plugging for political education, encouraging viewers to care more about knowing how the government and the political system work, to help citizens in their wish to live peaceful and productive lives.

If we had our druthers, however, we would want the campaign to focus on making Filipinos aware of the burden that colonial mentality is, the ways it prevents us from coming into our own as a people, and the cultural insecurity that it promotes.

This specific campaign objective could be achieved by a combination of components, including dramatized success stories of individual Filipinos who have been able to rise above this limiting mind-set that is our inhibiting inheritance from our colonizers.

It would also have to criticize our preference for the foreign over the local, which impacts on so many of the goods we buy (whitening creams, "imported" brand names), the way we behave, our reactive rather than proactive stance on many issues, how we look to the west for "guidance" before we act—etc!

Truth to tell, our deep-seated colonial mentality, insecurity and lack of will to act independently to solve our problems in our own way account in great part for the *urong-sulong*, *gaya-gaya* and *ningas-cogon* nature of our national "progress."

An institutional ad campaign on this could be just what the doctor ordered to help us refocus our vision, straighten our spine, and reorder our priorities.

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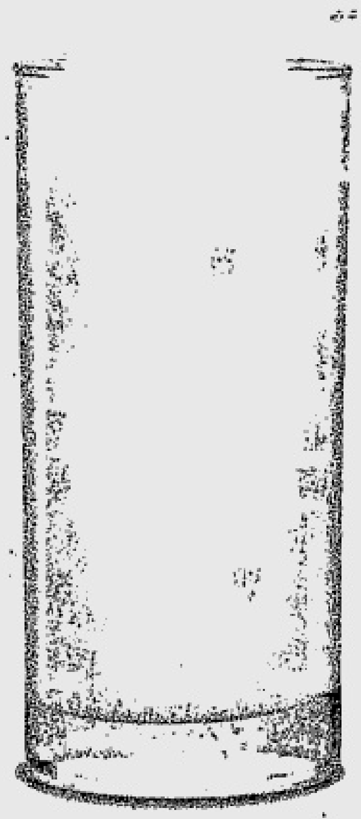

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'Travel Time' visits Spain

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"TRAVEL Time" on Studio 23 at 11:30 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 8 takes viewers to Spain with its episode, "The Black Madonna." This is the first of a five-part series titled "The Modern Pilgrim: Piety and Pleasure in Modern Spain," sponsored by Globe, BPI Foundation, Duty Free Philippines and the Tourism Board of Spain.

Monday's episode features Barcelona and a side trip to the Black Madonna in Montserrat, plus the Virgin of Del Pilar, patroness of all Spanish territories, and Roman-era destinations in Zaragoza.

The travel show's five-part series on Spain will air Mondays until January. The second episode, which will be aired on Dec. 15, will focus on the Basque region, the church of Ignatius of Loyola, the room where he was converted in Azpeitia, the home of Josemaria Escriva in Torreciudad, and Zumarraga, the birthplace of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi.

"Travel Time" is hosted and produced by the exuberantly peripatetic Susan Calo Medina.

Regine's show extended

"Songbird Sings Streisand," Regine Velasquez's hit musical tribute to Barbra Streisand, will have an extended run at Onstage, Greenbelt 1 on Dec. 6, 12-13 and 19-20. For tickets, call 891-5610 or 551-7777.

Regine empathizes both emotionally and vocally with Streisand's repertoire, and this "musical chemistry" makes for her especially personal renditions of Barbra's signature songs.

'Good Boy!'

Stellar voice actors have cheerfully gone to the dogs in the forthcoming film, "Good Boy!," an animated movie described as "an out-of-this-world adventure about the friendship between dogs and their best (human) friends."

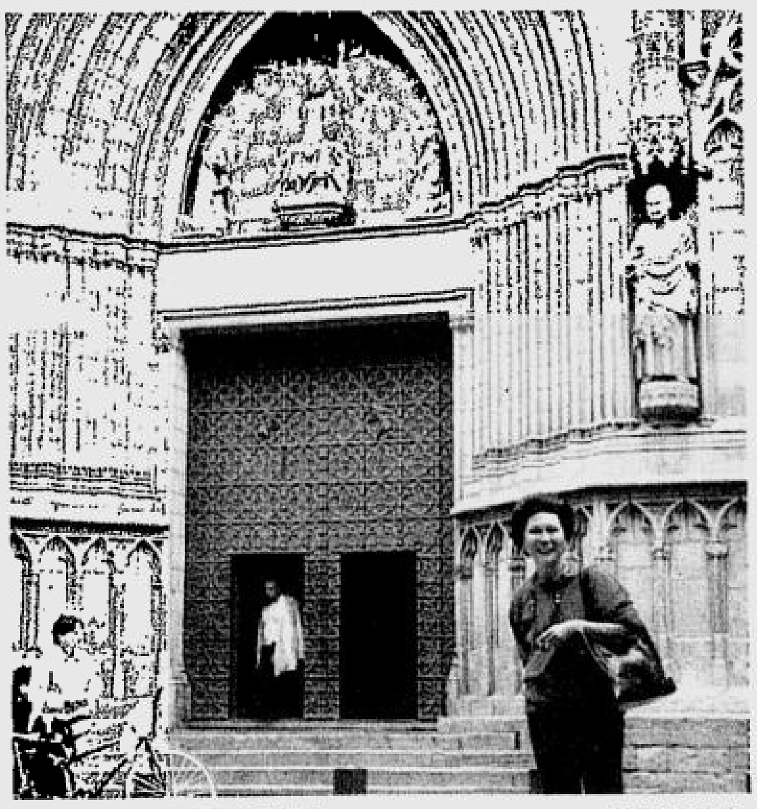
VELASQUEZ. Empathetic renditions of Streisand's signature songs.

Brittany Murphy voices Nelly, a jittery but sweet Italian Greyhound. Brittany enjoyed lending Nelly her voice, and describes her dubbing session for the movie as "one of my all-time favorite jobs ever."

Veteran comic Carl Reiner did Shep, a Bernese Mountain Dog. Reiner knew Shep was a jokester, so that affected his vocal performance.

And who better than Delta Burke to play the pampered poodle-with-attitude Barbara Ann? Like the other voice actors, Burke played around with her voice to find the right one for Barbara Ann, and it wasn't easy.

"But you just have to laugh at yourself," she says. "Now I can bark, snarl and growl on cue! I had a great time doing this film."



SUSAN Calo Medina, host of "Travel Time," visits Santa Maria Mar in Barcelona.

MURPHY VOICES NELLY. "One of my all-time favorite jobs."

Movies on TV

On HBO, Dec. 6 at 3:45 p.m., "The Man Who Saved Christmas." 1:40 a.m., "Stealing Beauty." Dec. 7 at 11:15 a.m., "Enemy at the Gates." 9 p.m., "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone." 11:30 p.m., "Forrest Gump." Dec. 8 at 12:30 p.m., "Children of a Lesser God." 11 p.m., "I Am Sam."

Dec. 9 at 9:30 a.m., "Pavilion of Women." Dec. 10 at 2:15 p.m., "With Honors." 2:15 p.m., "Hedwig and the Angry Inch." Dec. 11 at 9 p.m., "Training Day." Dec. 12 at 6 a.m., "The Battle of Mary Kay."

On Cinemax: Dec. 6 at 9:15 a.m., "The Grinch." Dec. 7 at 9:15 a.m., "Look Who's Talking." Dec. 8 at 1:30 p.m., "Regarding Henry." Dec. 9 at 6:30 a.m., "Crossing Delancey." 4:15 p.m., "When Worlds Collide."

Dec. 10 at 8:15 a.m., "The Bridges at Toko-Ri." 1:40 a.m., "From Here to Eternity." Dec. 11 at 11:15 a.m., "Witness." Dec. 12 at 8 a.m., "Another Country."

What silent films are telling today's crop of filmmakers

By Ronald G. Mangubat

MY only exposure to silent films was when I was a child who caught a few glimpses of Charlie Chaplin movies on television. What struck me then, aside from Chaplin's exceptional comic talent, was how silent movies made me laugh harder compared to their colored, "talking" counterparts.

Fascination

Recently, my dormant fascination was awakened when the Goethe Institute screened the silent movie, "Unheimliche Geschichen" or "Horror Stories," at the Podium.

The film was initially shown in Berlin in 1919 and was not seen for nearly 80 years, until it was recently restored by ARTE International Archives and Kirch Media.

Directed by Richard Oswald, "Horror Stories" is a quintet of short horror-comic tales starring three stars of the silent film era: Conrad Veidt, Paul Wegener and Anita Berber. These actors, dressed in Halloween-like costumes, stepped out of a painting in an antiquarian bookshop and read stories from a big book.

The first story is about an aristocratic man whose wife disappears from an inn, and everyone swears she was never there.

In the second story, "The Hand," a man strangles his opponent to death, but the dead man's ghost returns to haunt the killer, who dies of a heart attack.

The third story is about a drunkard who kills his wife when he discovers she is having an affair with another man.

Favorite

My favorite is the fourth tale, "The Suicide Club," about an intruder who enters the secret location of a clandestine group of men who plays a dangerous game.

The last tale revolves around a young woman who was left alone in the house by her husband. She invites a man who was attacked outside the castle ground. Then, the guest becomes attracted to the woman.

Oswald made the film during the height of German Expressionism. During that time, the dominant mood was characterized by pessimism, romantic melancholia and the role of fate in men's lives.

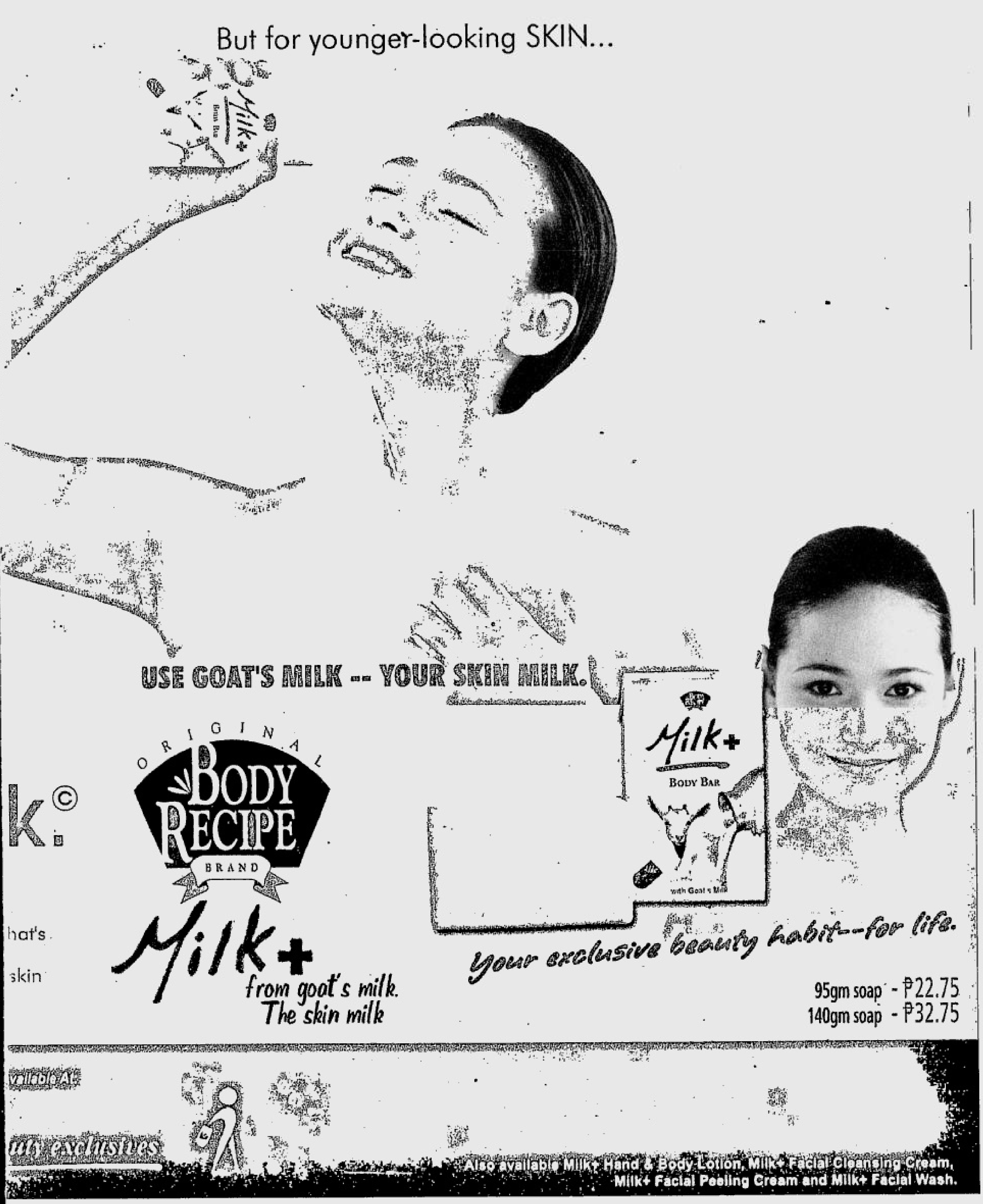
As an internet source says, "There is always a fundamental sense of 'wrongness' in Expressionist films that gives them their horror.'

By New Millennium standards, the film is far from scary. While the theme is dark and has macabre overtones, some actions evoke laughter from the audience.

Importance

What are silent films telling today's crop of filmmakers? First, they remind us of the importance of film archiving, one of the most neglected aspects of movie production.

Second, silent films remind us of the power of simple storytelling—to show rather than tell, to clarify in terms of action rather than words.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6 CYCLE MIND. Every day is a learning experience.

Band feels on top of the world

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

6 CYCLE Mind can spin stories on love, loss and life without being preachy or overbearing. Sometimes their songs speak of being in an unconnected world, yet there are no traces of bitterness or resentment in their lyrics. How can they strike a balance in their songwriting?

Parallels

"Most of the things we write about are basic emotions. There has to be something else in your life where you can draw parallels for the songs you write. The message has to be universal but it should also be personal," Chuck, guitars, shares.

"*Madaling* i-digest *ang* songs *namin. Kinakanta namin yung* experience *ng mga* listener *namin,*" Ney, vocals, adds.

How was 6 Cycle Mind born? Forming the final lineup for the band was difficult because they kept on changing drummers. When the band finally got Gilbert as their drummer, they had to struggle with writing and arranging songs when they signed up with BMG Records.

Dream gig

"Seriously, when people ask what our dream gig is, most of us say opening for the Rolling Stones. *Libre naman ang managinip, di ba?*" Ney grins.

Creating the name 6 Cycle Mind was a good idea because it's catchy. Although the band reveal that they had to take a poll to come up with a good name. It also helps that they have different musical influences: Ney loves Matchbox Twenty; Rye, guitars, likes The Beatles and GoGo Dolls; Chuck digs AfterImage; Bobby, bass, prefers Jim Blossom, and Gilbert, drums, adores Stone Temple Pilots and the Beatles.

The hardest thing about recording is staying up until the wee hours of the morning to polish a song. Bobby insists that "Gaya ng Noon" was the hardest song to record.

What do they like about being in a band?

Pent-up emotions

"It's a good way to express and release pent-up emotions," Ney grins. "It's a good way to fulfill yourself," Chuck adds.

"Every day is a learning experience because you grow as a person and as a musician," Rye shares. "I can do what I love, which is to play music and make other people happy at the same time," Bobby enthuses.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

‘Bad Santa’ is relentlessly dark–and funny

By Christy Lemire

NEW YORK—You better watch out: The ads for “Bad Santa” suggest that it’s a wacky holiday romp.

Far from it: The movie is relentlessly dark. It’s also infinitely funnier than you’d expect.

Human quirks

Director Terry Zwigoff proves again, as he did with “Ghost World” (one of the best films of 2001), how acutely observant he is of human quirks. And Thornton proves again, as he’s done in nearly every film he’s ever made, that he’s not afraid to play a miserable character.

There’s nothing likable about Willie, a part-time department store Santa Claus and full-time alcoholic con man. Yet he’s strangely irresistible—to his reluctant partner (Tony Cox), a midget who dresses as an elf; to a bartender (the sexy, adorable Lauren Graham) who happens to have a Santa fetish; and to a chirpy, cherubic boy (Brett Kelly) who truly believes Willie is Kris Kringle and clings to him as a father figure.

Supporting role

Willie and Marcus (Cox, best known for his memorable supporting role in “Me, Myself & Irene”) go from city to city, tolerating the seemingly endless array of children who want something shiny and new on Christmas morning. But the Santa gig is merely an excuse to get inside department stores in order to crack their safes and do a little after-hours shopping on Christmas Eve.

Then they get to Phoenix, where Willie’s erratic behavior raises the suspicions of the department store manager (John Ritter in his last film role) and the security chief (an underused Bernie Mac), who’s a suspicious character himself. Ritter, to whom the film is dedicated, plays the perfect uptight foil—similar to his character in “Sling Blade,” in which he also co-starred with Thornton.

THORNTON (left) is not afraid to play a miserable character. AP

Willie is profane and anti-social, a chain smoker who drinks so heavily, he’s oblivious when he urinates all over himself. He’s an unscrupulous shell of a man with no chance at redemption—not that he wants one.

Thornton plays him as if he were a character in a drama, without a trace of caricature, which makes him totally believable.

Cushy life

Somehow, Willie stumbles into a cushy life when he moves in with a chubby, insecure boy whose wealthy father is in prison; the only other person in the house is the boy’s clueless grandmother (Cloris Leachman, who doesn’t get to do much besides offer to make sandwiches). He also gets a girlfriend, whom he didn’t pursue but doesn’t mind having around.

The humor from screenwriters Glenn Ficarra and John Requa, who also wrote the much tamer “Cats & Dogs,” sneaks up on you.

While the film appears on its surface to be yet another exercise in cynicism, like the insufferably heavy-handed “Death to Smoochy,” its surreal, deadpan nature is more reminiscent of the hugely underrated “Office Space.”

It doesn’t beat you over the head with the fact that it’s raunchy and edgy—it simply is.

Trite choices

Willie dismisses one child after another for their trite gift choices, then enjoys a quickie with a strange woman in the plus-size dressing room. It’s all in a day’s work.

Even when the film threatens to turn feel-good, it thankfully resists the urge; when Willie finally comes up with a toy for the boy who’s inexplicably befriended him, it’s covered in blood.

That’s a perfect metaphor for the film itself.

“Bad Santa,” a Dimension Films release, runs 95 minutes. Three stars out of four. *AP*

MRAZ. Ubiquitous.

Mostly overplayed tracks in new acoustic album

By Noelani Torre

THERE has been a proliferation of compilations lately, most of them sporting an “acoustic,” “unplugged” and/or “live” tag.

This elimination of the synth machine seems to be the current musical trend, and though we have absolutely nothing against this practice, we have also become increasingly tired of a format that is becoming overused (and misused).

We aren’t alone in thinking this, but it seems that most folks still can’t get enough of unplugged music, if the continued release of acoustic CDs is any indication.

Recent release

One such recent release is Warner Music’s “AKA (Almost Kinda Acoustic) 2,” the follow-up to—guess what?—“Almost Kinda Acoustic.”

Of the 18 tracks in this compilation, only five are truly acoustic/live/unplugged. A more accurate title would have been in order, something along the lines of “Not Really Acoustic.”

Most if not all of the songs in this CD are pop and/or can be classified as easy listening, a fact that will no doubt make it more appealing to a wider range of listeners, but which also results in a not-so-interesting mix of mostly overplayed tracks.

1999 hit

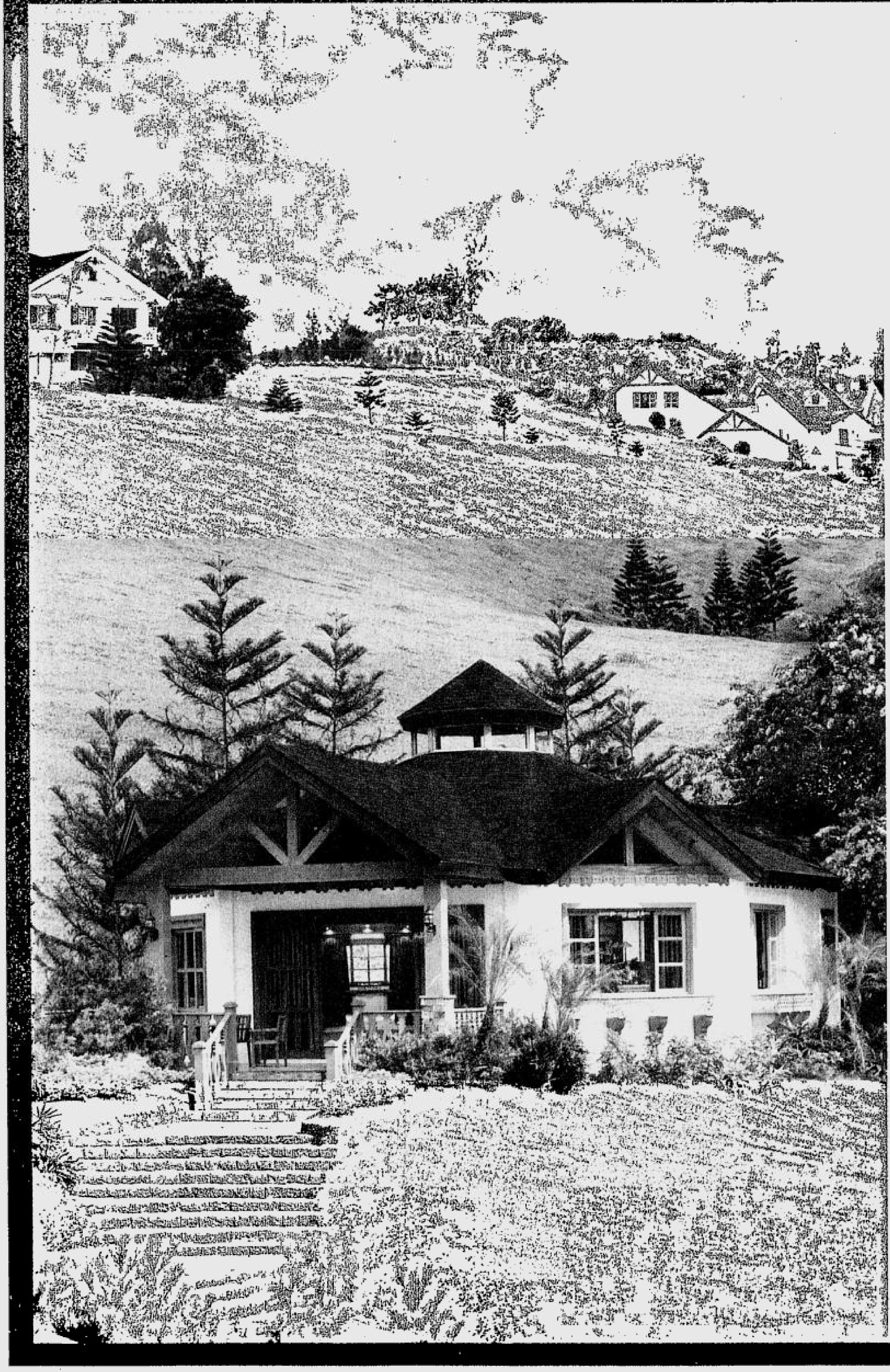
CD-opener is Edwin McCain’s 1999 hit, “I Could Not Ask For More,” which was featured in the movie “Message In A Bottle.”

This is followed by the more recent “Officially Missing You” by Tamia, and then by Peter Mayer’s “Moonlight Over Paris,” which we’re sure you’ve never heard before—if you’re from Pluto!

The rest of the tracks include songs by the ubiquitous Jason Mraz, Jewel, Third Eye Blind, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Eagle Eye Cherry, Everything But The Girl, and so on.

These have more or less the same flavor, so the CD is obviously aiming for a laid-back, mildly romantic feel—this makes it ideally suited for after-dinner settling-down, or siesta hour at the office.

(To be concluded)



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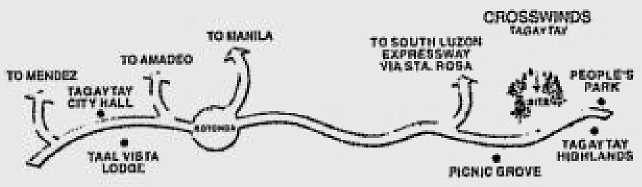

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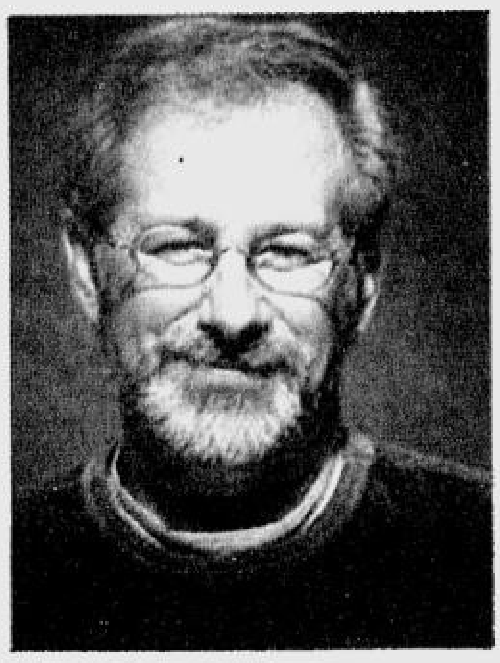

SPIELBERG. Chosen 'Best Director of the 20th Century' in an online poll.

Spielberg dreams for a living

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

FROM Gloria Gancia: **"Please feature Steven Spielberg in your column. What are his next projects?"**

Steven Spielberg's upcoming movies are highly anticipated: "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" is a Jim Carrey starrer, a remake of a 1947 comedy-fantasy flick; "The Terminal" stars Tom Hanks and Catherine Zeta Jones, and "Indiana Jones 4" reunites Spielberg with Harrison Ford.

Working principle

"I dream for a living" is an oft-repeated quote from the film *wunderkind*. He demonstrates his working principle of fusing fact and fantasy in his films by combining a childlike sense of wonder with glossy technical savvy.

A moviemaker since boyhood, Spielberg began experimenting with 8mm short films when he was in grade school. At 13, he won a prize for his 40-minute war film, "Escape to Nowhere."

He went to California State University after applying at and getting turned down—twice!—by the USC Film School (he now sits on its Board of Councilors), but dropped out before earning a degree.

Success

While in college, his 24-minute short, "Amblin," was screened at the Atlanta Film Festival. The film's success earned the 20-year-old a seven-year contract with Universal-MCA as a television director.

After directing episodes of TV series ("Columbo," "Marcus Welby, M.D."), Spielberg's first feature-length TV movie, "Duel," earned him critical praise, and the opportunity to direct for the big screen. His skill was immediately apparent in a showy segment of the episodic TV movie, "Night Gallery," in which Joan Crawford played a blind woman.

During an on-set conversation with a Detroit Free Press reporter, Crawford pointed Spielberg out and said, "Go interview that kid—he's going to be the biggest director of all time!"

Spielberg on Crawford: "She is 5'4" but she looks six feet tall onscreen. She has no great range as an actress, yet within her range, she can perform better than any of her contemporaries." He and Crawford remained good friends until her death in 1977.

He made his feature film debut in 1974 with "The Sugarland Express," a crime drama starring Goldie Hawn. But it was the film "Jaws," about a great white shark who wreaks bloody havoc on the seas around a beach town, that thrust him to international superstardom. Its filming ran over an unprecedented 100 days, but the $8.5 million movie ultimately grossed $260 million!

Tradition

The success of Spielberg's classic shark attack tale was credited with starting the tradition of the "summer blockbuster," with 1975's first $100-million megahit.

And the rest ("Close Encounters of the Third Kind," "Indiana Jones," "E.T.," "Empire of the Sun," "The Color Purple," "Jurassic Park," "Schindler's List," "Amistad," "Saving Private Ryan," "A.I.," "Minority Report," "Catch Me If You Can," etc.) is history.

In May last year, 35 years after he had first entered college, Spielberg graduated from Cal State with a bachelor's degree in film. He dropped out of college in 1968 to concentrate on his career, but finished his degree via independent projects.

He donned cap and gown and marched (to the theme of "Indiana Jones") in the commencement ceremony with his fellow graduates. He has an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Yale University.

He divorced Amy Irving ("Yentl") in 1989, and is now married to Kate Capshaw ("Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom").

Entertainment Weekly called Spielberg

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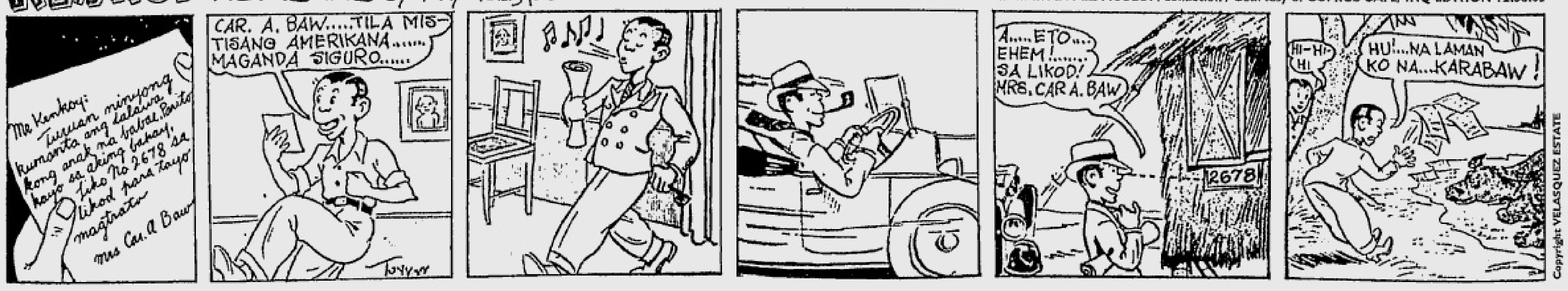
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Movie buffs recall their favorite Christmas films

By Behn Cervantes

"IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE." Holiday staple on television.

SINCE Christmas is just around the corner, I recently asked some friends what their Christmas films are. Anton Juan, the excitable actor-director-playwright, screamed, "'All Mine to Give,' which they showed at Gaiety Theater every December!"

Tearjerker

So, what did he like about the tearjerker about a woman forced to give up all her children because of poverty? "Well, it was really about orphans and family. After all, the Christmas celebration is really geared toward children and family bonding."

Anton also loves "A Christmas Carol," because the film combines the innocence of youth, the antithesis of the Christmas spirit in Scrooge, and his redemption because of pure love along with the heartwarming transformation of character so in tune with the Yuletide spirit.

Monette Flores considers "It's A Wonderful Life," starring James Stewart, Donna Reed and Lionel Barrymore, her favorite. This television Christmas standard is about an ordinary man who is so down and out before the Yuletide celebration that he is ready to take his own life.

He meets an unlikely angel who arrives in the nick of time to make him realize how much love he would miss from his family and friends if he pursued his fatal intention. Monette is so taken by the film that she even has the complete movie town, with which she decorates the base of her family's Christmas tree.

Pivotal role

Ianthe de Leon cannot think of a Christmas film in particular, but she loves the Christmas scene in "An Affair to Remember" and its pivotal role in reuniting the estranged lovers at the finale of the sentimental film remembered best for its theme song, so lovingly interpreted by the honey-voiced Vic Damone.

Alex Cortez, stage actor and director, likes "Scrooge" mainly because this modern version of Dicken's "A Christmas Carol" is touching. "It made me cry. Besides, I like all things like mistletoes, turkey and ham despite the fact that I am a *probinsiyano* from San Pablo.

"All my foreign *chukchuk* enter the picture, although more often than not, at home, there is *lechon* and *leche flan.*" He also likes the fact that, in the film, good triumphs over evil during this wonderful season of love, friendship and peace on earth to men of goodwill.

Josefina Agravante, a former dean of the College of Arts and Science, thinks the "Home Alone" movies were wonderful Christmas films because their was the sanctity of home and how a young boy realizes the true meaning of family when he is separated from them.

Of course, the film also has comic bad guys who, despite their evil intentions, lose out to the wily young boy who outsmarts them all.

Victorious

It is the legendary David versus Goliath theme with the little, lovable David coming out victorious in time to be reunited with his loving parents and siblings for Christmas—under the gigantic Rockefeller Plaza Christmas tree, no less.

Sonia Joaquin Valenciano, stage actress and former Speech professor, couldn't think of a movie right off, but said it was always a family tradition to watch a performance of the ballet "The Nutcracker Suite."

Well, a version of the Tchaikovsky tale has been turned into a film at some point or other, so I guess Sonia's answer is acceptable. (P.S., "Nutcracker" is currently being restaged at the CCP by Ballet Philippines—don't miss it!)

Ronnie Amuyot, the youngest of the interviewees, chose "The Grinch" starring Jim Carrey. Why such an unconventional film, I asked, when there are films like "White Christmas" and "It's A Wonderful Life"? "Well, that's my opinion," Ronnie said rather smugly, although with an accompanying conciliatory smile. And a Merry Christmas to you, too!

Showcase for promising playwrights

By Nestor U. Torre

WE have many good playwrights in this country, but many of them wither on the vine because their plays remain unproduced. Or else, they are mounted by inept amateurs who don't know how to underscore and bring out their best points.

Major loss

Bruised by this bad, sad experience, quite a number of talented playwrights stop writing, and opt to do something less stressful and insulting. This is a major loss, because a country's playwrights are supposed to articulate and dramatize its concerns and aspirations.

If fewer writers do that, how can the nation find the inspiration and insights it needs to know and express itself, and thus forge ahead with a clearer sense of direction and purpose?

In our own modest way of helping in this regard, we have teamed up with the Write Circle, Councilor Lou Veloso and the Sta. Ana Arts Center to put up a mini-festival of new one-act plays by emerging playwrights, with performances to start on Jan. 20, 2004.

Initiative

This initiative seeks to provide a performance showcase for the 40-minute scripts of three developing playwrights, to be mounted for an audience of 100 by an experienced stage director.

It is hoped that the new playwrights will learn a lot about their craft from seeing their plays staged by veteran theater artists, as well as from the reactions of the members of the audience, and the discussion and interaction that will follow each performance.

If you want to take advantage of this "learning showcase," submit your one-act play in English or Filipino to the Write Circle, c/o Jeanne Lim, 54 Twin Hill st., Rolling Hills Subdivision, New Manila, QC. For more details, call Jeanne at 416-3479 or 0919-3338386.

The one-act plays you submit should require a maximum of four actors. Deadline for script submission is Dec. 20.

All of the submitted scripts will be read and evaluated, and three of them will be selected for initial mounting. If there are other promising scripts, a second batch of three more may be presented starting Feb. 20.

Adjustments

It's important for playwrights to understand that this isn't a contest, simply an opportunity to have the most promising 40-minute scripts produced, showcased and discussed, so the playwrights can get their voices heard, and can learn from the director and actors, and from all of the adjustments that have to be made before a script can be deemed ready for a live audience to appreciate.

This production showcase is designed to help relatively new and untested writers, so this isn't the venue for veteran playwrights' works. It's important to help artists at the start of their careers, when most doors are closed to them, so let's keep this modest showcase exclusively for them. New playwrights, write on!

Spielberg dreams . . .

From page F1

the most powerful person in entertainment (1997). He had topped Premiere magazine's annual Hollywood Power list ranking in 1994, 1995 and 2003.

Online poll

Spielberg was named "Best Director of the 20th Century" in a 1999 EW online poll, beating runners-up Alfred Hitchcock and Stanley Kubrick.

He is so popular that he even has his own stalker: Jonathan Norman, who was sentenced in 1998 to 25 years to life, for stalking Spielberg and threatening to rape him!

According to IMDB, Spielberg spent five months developing the script of "Rain Man" with Ron Bass, but had to commit to direct "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade." Nevertheless, he gave all of his notes to director Barry Levinson.

He almost directed "Big," but didn't want to steal the limelight from his sister, Anne, who co-wrote the script. As a director, he rarely does auditions for major roles, and he often casts new actors based on their performances in other works.

Spielberg was on the advisory board of the Boy Scouts of America, but left because he did not agree with the fact that the BSA discriminated against homosexuals.

Four films

How does he prepare for his films? "Before I go off and direct a movie, I always watch four films: Kurosawa's 'Seven Samurai,' Lean's 'Lawrence of Arabia,' Capra's 'It's A Wonderful Life' and Ford's 'The Searchers,'" the acclaimed filmmaker reveals.

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM DEC 6 - DEC 12

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	6:00 Star in A Million 6:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 8:30 Home Along da Airport 9:00 Victim 9:30 Buttercup 10:30 Kontrobersyal 11:30 "F" 12:00 Sports Unlimited	7:00 Yan Ang Pinoy 8:00 The Working President 9:00 To be Announced	7:00 Sailormoon Sailor Stars 7:30 Mirror, Mirror 8:00 Wow Mali! 9:00 Viva Box Office 11:00 Go For Gold	6:00 Search for a Star 7:00 Imbestigador 8:00 Idol Ko Si Kap 9:30 Kakabakaba Adventures 10:30 Celebrity Turns 11:30 Flash Report 12:00 Master Showman	6:00 Isumbong Mo Kay Tulfo 7:00 7 Days 8:00 John Doe 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse 11:00 PGMA	6:00 TV for a Cause 7:00 Laktay TV 8:00 Amazing Twins 9:00 Vatican Christmas 11:00 Iyo ang Katarungan	6:00 Baywatch 7:00 Game Plan 7:30 The Amazing Race 8:30 Boston Public 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 11:30 Reel Deel	6:00 Agila Reports 6:30 New Yankee Workshop 7:00 Car Guys 7:30 Screen Savers 8:30 Home Grown 9:00 Iglesia ni Cristo Television	7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras Ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling
	5:30 Sharon 7:00 Wansapanataym 8:30 Tanging Ina 9:30 Sunday Family Cinema 11:30 Dong Puno Tonight 12:00 The Weekend News	6:00 PBA First Filipino cup 9:00 The Working President 10:00 Concert of Various Artist	6:00 Zorro 6:30 Guyferd 7:00 Ispup atpb. 8:00 Sing-Galing 9:00 Viva Cine Idols 11:00 Speed	5:30 Partners Mel & Jay 7:00 K! 8:30 Daddy Di Do Du 9:30 Sunday Night Box Office 11:20 Flash Report 11:30 Che-Che Lazaro Presents	6:00 Smack Down Wrestling 7:00 Ripley's Believe It or Not 8:00 May Puso ang Batas 9:00 Sunday's Big Event 11:00 A Second Look	7:00 2003 Worldpool Master 9:00 Sinemaks 11:00 Driven Show 11:30 El Shaddai	6:00 Jimmy Neutron 6:30 Futurama 7:00 Exposed 8:00 Yes Dear 8:30 Spin City 9:00 Will & Grace 9:30 The Bachelor 10:30 Digital Tour	6:00 Captured 6:30 Home Grown 7:00 Convergence 7:30 Fresh Gear 8:00 Tomorrow Today 8:30 Arts Unlimited 9:00 Iglesia ni Cristo Television	7:00 Sunday Mini-Series 8:00 Oh Tokyo 9:00 Sunday Night movies
	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Next Level Na, Game K N B? 7:30 Basta't Kasama Kita 8:00 Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas 8:30 24 9:00 OK Fine Whatever 11:00 Insider 11:30 The Correspondents	6:00 Concert at the Park 7:00 Strangebrew 7:30 In the Raw 8:00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 Family Rosary Crusade 11:00 Auto Focus	6:00 F 6:30 Balitang-Balita 7:00 Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko 7:30 Kool on Kam 8:30 That 70s Show 9:00 On Air 9:30 Misadventures of Maverick and Ariel 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Mad TV	6:15 Frontpage 7:00 Extra Challenge 7:30 Twin Hearts 8:00 Endless Love II 8:30 Starstruck 9:00 Narito Ang Puso Ko 9:30 Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita 11:00 Saksi 11:30 I-Witness	6:00 Invader Zim 6:30 Entertainment Tonight 7:00 Just for Laffs 8:00 Jag 9:00 The Agency 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Sex & the City 11:00 OPTV	7:00 NBA 9:30 In This Corner 10:30 IBC News Tonite 11:00 Linawin Natin	6:00 Beast Machines 6:30 Godzilla 7:00 Batman 7:30 Samurai X 8:00 Birds of Prey 9:00 Charmed 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 Travel Time	6:00 Net 25 Report 6:30 World Report Filipino Edition 7:00 Openline 7:30 Euromaxx 8:00 Convergence 8:30 DWTV Journal 9:00 Iglesia ni Cristo Television	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan
	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Next Level Na, Game K N B? 7:30 Basta't Kasama Kita 8:00 Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas 8:30 24 9:00 Bida Si Mister, Bida Si Misis 11:00 Insider 11:30 Pipol	6:00 Paco Park Presents 7:00 Strangebrew 7:30 In the Raw 8:00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 The Working President 11:00 Family Rosary Crusade	6:00 2 Years Vacation w/ Dinosaurs 6:30 Balitang-Balita 7:00 Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko 7:30 Kool on Kam 8:30 Campus TV 9:00 E.R. 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Wedding Works 11:00 Bugs	6:15 Frontpage 7:00 Extra Challenge 7:30 Twin Hearts 8:00 Endless Love II 8:30 Starstruck 9:00 Narito Ang Puso Ko 9:30 All Together Now 11:00 Saksi 11:30 I-Witness	6:00 Invader Zim 6:30 Entertainment Tonight 7:00 Ed 8:00 Ally McBeal 9:00 Single Girls 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Sports In Focus 11:00 RTV, Our Rhythm, Our Reality	7:00 2003 Worldpool Master 9:00 Gawad Kalinga 10:00 Travel 10:30 IBC News Tonite 11:00 Up Close and Personal 11:30 Action Express	6:00 Beast Machines 6:30 Godzilla 7:00 Batman 7:30 Samurai X 8:00 Dawson's Creek 9:00 Smallville 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 Twilight Zone	6:00 Net 25 Report 6:30 World Report Filipino Edition 7:00 Openline 7:30 Euromaxx 8:00 Screen Savers Edit A 8:30 DWTV Journal 9:00 Iglesia ni Cristo Television	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan
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	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Next Level Na, Game K N B? 7:30 Basta't Kasama Kita 8:00 Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas 8:30 24 9:00 Maalaala Mo Kaya 11:00 Insider 11:30 Dong Puno Live	6:00 The Working President 7:00 Ugnayan Pambansa 8:00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 Paco Park Presents 11:00 Family Rosary Crusade	6:00 Dragon League 6:30 Balitang-Balita 7:00 Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko 7:30 Kool on Kam 8:30 Guinness World Records 9:30 Working 10:00 The Big News 10:30 By Request	6:15 Frontpage 7:00 Extra Challenge 7:30 Twin Hearts 8:00 Endless Love II 8:30 Starstruck 9:00 Narito Ang Puso Ko 9:30 Magpakailanman 11:00 Saksi 11:30 Debate	6:00 Invader Zim 6:30 Entertainment Tonight 7:00 Baby Bob 7:30 Sabrina 8:00 Felicity 9:00 Crossing Jordan 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Hidden Hills 11:00 Police Hour	6:00 Game Channel 7:00 NBA 9:30 CelebrityDotCom 10:30 IBC News Tonite 11:00 Opinyon at Desisyon	6:00 Beast Machines 6:30 Godzilla 7:00 Batman 7:30 Samurai X 8:00 Barkada Nights 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 Twilight Zone	6:00 Net 25 Report 6:30 World Report Filipino Edition 7:00 Openline 7:30 Euromaxx 8:00 Screen Savers Edit B 8:30 DWTV Journal 9:00 Iglesia ni Cristo Television	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan 10:30 Q Showcase
	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Next Level Na, Game K N B? 7:30 Basta't Kasama Kita 8:00 Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas 8:30 24 9:00 Star Cinema Presents 11:00 Insider 11:30 Private I	5:00 PBA First Filipino cup 10:00 The Working President 11:00 Family Rosary Crusade	6:00 Fancy Lala 6:30 Balitang-Balita 7:00 Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko 7:30 Kool on Kam 8:00 The Big Night 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Friday Box Office	6:15 Frontpage 7:00 Extra Challenge 7:30 Twin Hearts 8:00 Endless Love II 8:30 Starstruck 9:00 Narito Ang Puso Ko 9:30 Bubble Gang 11:00 Saksi 11:30 Emergency	6:00 Invader Zim 6:30 Entertainment Tonight 7:00 The Pretender 8:00 Just for Laffs 8:30 Dharma & Greg 9:00 Dead Zone 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 TV Greats on Friday	10:00 Entrepinoy 10:30 IBC News Tonite 11:00 GMA The Working President	6:00 Beast Machines 6:30 Godzilla 7:00 X-Men 7:30 Justice League 8:00 Thieves 9:00 The X-Files 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 Twilight Zone	6:00 Net 25 Report 6:30 World Report Filipino Edition 7:00 Openline 7:30 Euromaxx 8:00 Auto Motor and Sports 8:30 DWTV Journal 9:00 Iglesia ni Cristo Television	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan

'Seal IV' has its good moments

By Noelani Torre

THE VOICE is as good as ever, was, the image as irresistibly inscrutable, but the music, though several notches above candy floss Hillary Duff fare, isn't as heart-grabbing as, say, 1994's "Kiss from a Rose."

Absence

Yes, ladies and gents, it's Seal we're speaking of, back after an absence of five years and touting his fourth offering, "Seal IV" (Warner Bros.), his third self-titled album.

The process of making this 11-song album has been an arduous one, according to the singer. "I wrote and recorded a whole other album," he says. "But when it was all said and done, it just wasn't good enough. It took a while to accept that fact, and a while longer to regain my perspective.

"But I don't think I could have done this album without going through that experience. It allowed me to begin again, to rediscover what I loved about music and how to best express that love."

Unmarketable

That other album was apparently considered unmarketable by his recording company, though rumor has it that it has a far more interesting sound than the mostly mild "Seal IV."

First track "Get It Together," with its combination of soul and disco, is indicative of the rest of the album's sound, as well as sentiment. An "anthem-ic" piece complete with a horns-filled chorus, "Get It Together" tells us, "We got to keep this world together/ Got to keep it moving straight," and that we have to "Trust and forgive each other."

It may sound tired but he does mean it, and when he sings it in that smooth yet grainy voice of his, it seems as though he's the first person ever to sing about such things.

Unfortunately, he sings about the same topics throughout the album, which can get a little tedious.

Helmed by his longtime producer Trevor Horn, who also produced earlier albums including the multi-platinum Grammy award-winning "Seal II," the newest Seal album is tight and polished. Horn's clever arrangements flawlessly cushion the singer's distinctive voice and make even the more ordinary songs sound good.

Despite this first-class mixing, however, we feel that the songs would have benefited more from an application of grit and punch than from its seamless pop-grounded production.

Haunting ballad

Part of the attraction of Seal's earlier albums was that they were generally hard to classify. He had strong R&B roots but he also did songs that were more suited to grooving than mooning.

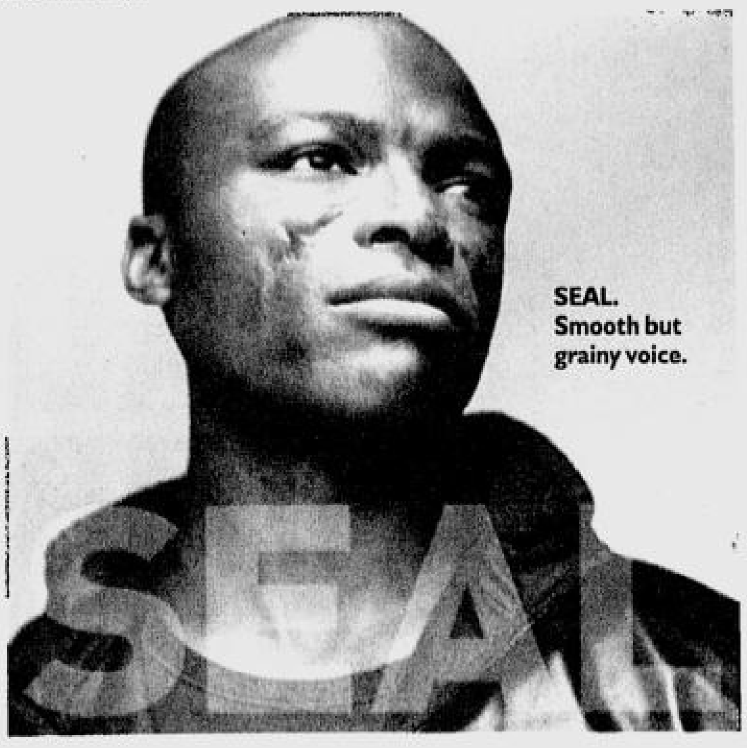
"Seal IV" has a more homogeneous quality to it that serves to unify the album, but also gives it its generally unexciting and pedestrian finish. Now, in contrast to his previous chart-hopping days, Seal can be safely classified under one heading—adult contemporary pop.

Still, this is good pop and Seal's music is a relief to listen to after the bubblegum, lightweight fluff of Duff and her ilk, with whom he shares chart-space.

We have several favorites in this album, most of them ballads, like "Don't Make Me Wait" and "Loneliest Star." The former is classic soul, though it has a few banal lyrics.

Truth to tell, "Seal IV" is a solid, well-wrought album that its makers obviously spent a lot of time and effort on.

Still, it seems to lack a certain something—more of the experimentation we've come to expect from Seal, perhaps. Or maybe it's a case of too much of a good thing—in this case, a brilliant but sometimes uncompromising producer.



SEAL. Smooth but grainy voice.

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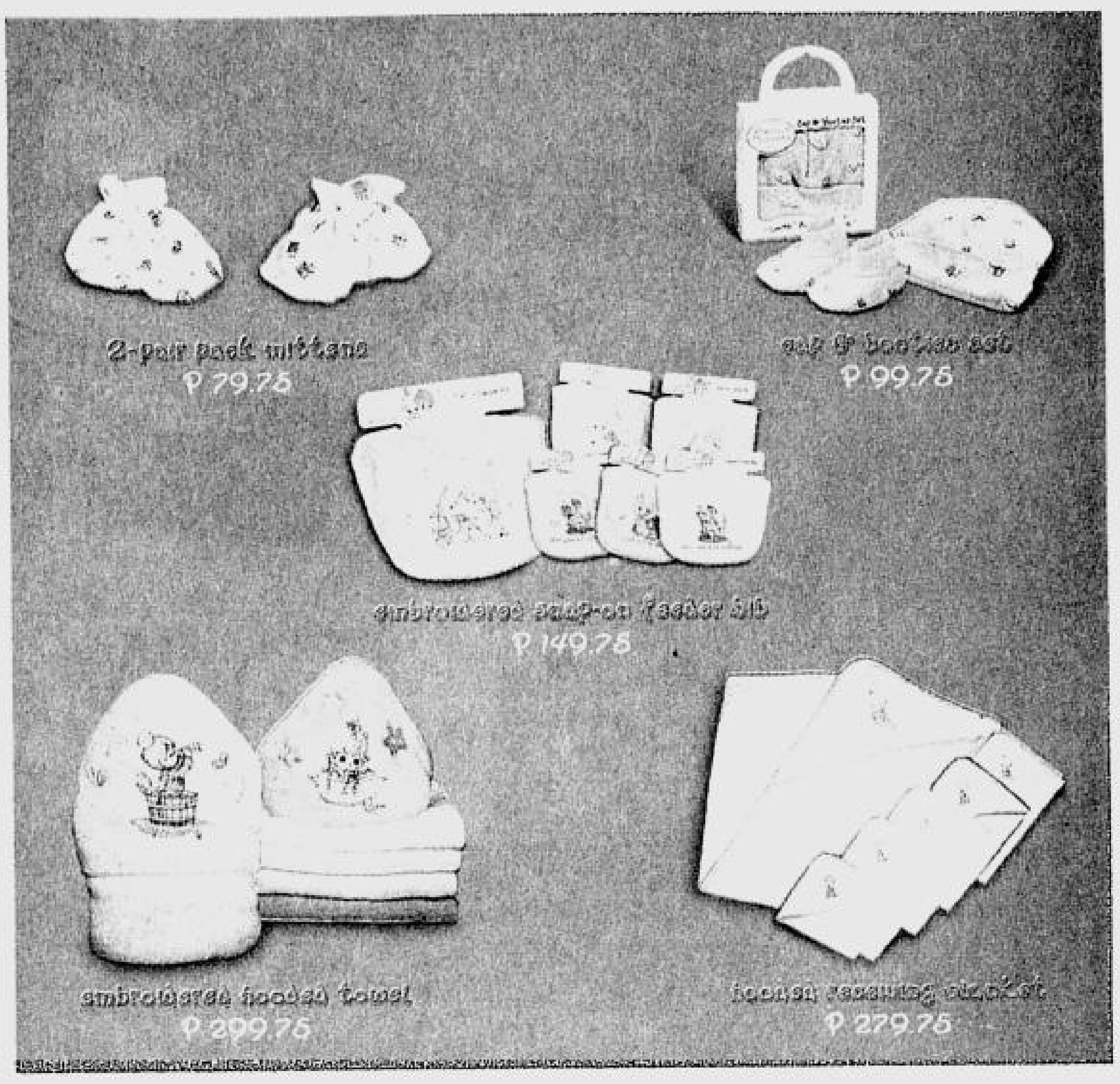

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Reli's big bash

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

VETERAN public relations guru Reli German celebrated his 60-plus birthday in style recently, courtesy of his wife, Bunny and children Chinot and Al (in absentia, as they reside in London), Mayet, Techie and Phillip, Lito and Ditas, and Alan and Doris.

Siblings

"Our mother and my siblings decided to hold this party here, because if we had left it up to him, we'd be celebrating it at Ma Mon Luk," Reli's youngest child, Alan, cracked as he co-emceed the program with older brother Lito, an executive at BMW.

Among those who came were MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, PDI editor-in-chief Letty J. Magsanoc, PDI columnists Conrad de Quiros with wife Lita; Bel Olivares Cunanan with husband, former Ambassador Thelmo Cunanan; Cory Quirino; Sen. Loren Legarda with former Batangas Gov. Tony Leviste; Rep. Teddy Boy Locsin; Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes; ARMM Gov. Parouk Hussein; former NFA Administrator Edno Joson; former Batangas Vice Gov. Ricky Reto; Pagcor chair Ephraim Genuino;

Veterans Bank chair Col. Emmanuel de Ocampo; former Sandiganbayan Justice Francis Garchitorena; former Solicitor General Frank Chavez; award-winning composer George Canseco; former Rep. Hermie Aquino, Andy Soriano, Jack Rodriguez and Nando Camus; Mike Enriquez with wife Baby, Paul Aquino, Tony Gana, Cip Roxas, Willie Baun, Nellie Sindayen, Emil Jurado, Linggoy and Baby Alcuaz, Pamen Hagedorn, Becky Garcia, Mother Lily Monteverde, Annabel Rama, RC and Duds Constantino, Eli Gardiner, Julian Coseteng, Cristina Pitcher, Mon Pagarigan, Edwin Abella, Roy Señeres and wife Minnie.

Light banter

Presidential candidate Raul Roco engaged in light banter with PDI founder Eggie Apostol, Aida Sevilla Mendoza, Yoly V. Ong, Marlyn Villapando and Chit Lijauco.

From Reli's Ateneo batch of '55: Rep. Butz Aquino, Ducky Paredes, Henry Francia, Bobby Hernandez, Pat Sarile, Ric Lacson, Toti Mendoza, Tony Lopa, Adolf Azcuna, Alex Pardo with Tess, Eddie Lapus with Chita, Tony Evangelista with Ching, Rudy Ledesma with Menie, and Mike Barretto with Inday.

Reli danced and sang up a storm. "I don't feel I'm 60 plus!," the grandfather of nine, enthused.

Photoworkshop

Mandy Navasero Digital Photoworkshop with hands-on exercises and critique runs every Saturday of the month from Dec. 13, 14 and 20; Jan. 10, 17 and 24; Feb. 7, 21 and 22; Mar. 6, 13 and 20, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Suite 227, 2nd flr., LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia st. (formerly Reposo st.), Bel-Air Village II, Makati City with guest lecturer David Hanson.

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BUNNY AND RELI GERMAN. Nine grandchildren.

LINGGOY and Baby Alcuaz (standing) with (seated from left) Chit Lijauco, Letty J. Magsanoc and Loren Legarda.

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Super! Countdown

19 days 'til Christmas

jingle, jingle!

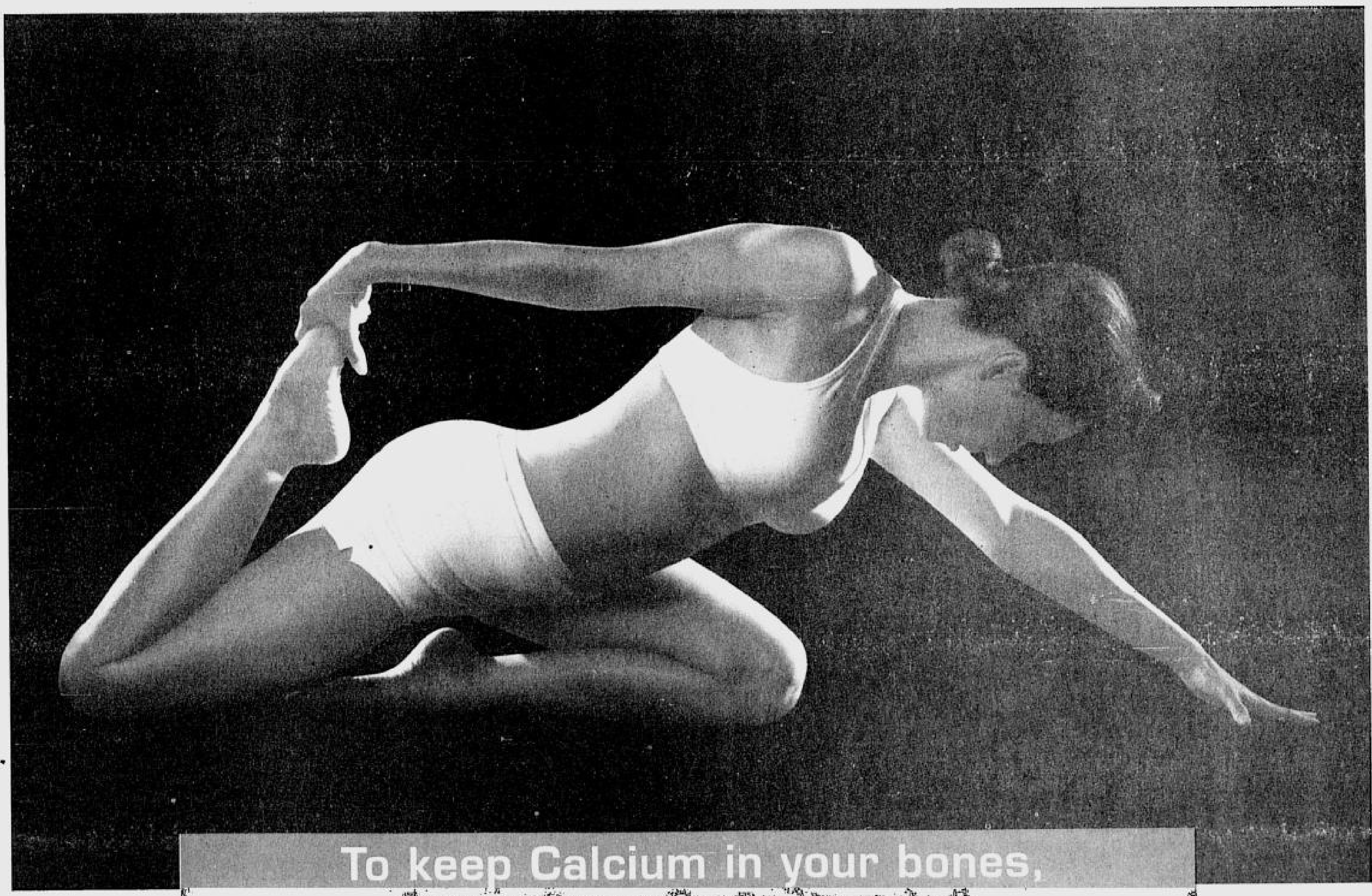
The cast of URINETOWN as photographed by Jake Versoza at the RCBC theater

Seeing Red
pageG2

Let's taste Diana Zubiri
page J1

Reinventing Pinoy TV
page J1

Toilet humor on stage
page H2



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Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

MANU Chao is the new Bob Marley.

At a bus stop in Damascus I met a Welsh couple who, on that sweltering June evening, were singing their lungs out to "Clandestino," the title track of Manu Chao's first-ever CD. In the years that I spent as a vagabond, I had heard more than a lion's share of Manu Chao's mesmerizing musical postcards, so it wasn't a total shocker. From grungy dives in Munich to sun-drenched cafés in Dahab, the ex-lead singer of one of France's most successful groups, Mano Negra, and his brand of all-weather dub reggae had hijacked jukeboxes to become the nomadic generation's default soundtrack. It was high time that someone new provided the chorus for our transcultural adventures. Bob Marley was becoming too much of a cliché and Boney M was just plain cheesy.

I owe this discovery to my German friend Nahne, a veteran navigator of the planet and a "Delhi Belly" survivor. I've always balanced the meat-and-potatoes music of FM radio with pleasantly exotic sounds, but I had never tripped over something indigenous in texture like Manu Chao's North-South symphonies. Thus began the enhanced state of my mental hygiene.

Lo-fi, high brow

I don't know what's in the water in Europe that makes the citizens, particularly Scandinavians, disturbingly cool. My roommate Kalle introduced me to "Crushing You With Style," a CD brimming with lo-fi dance music by Giant Robot—an electronic act from his hometown, Helsinki. That soon became a favorite. Before this, I never knew Finland had exports other than vodka, race car drivers, and mobile phones so my jaw hit the floor like an Acme anvil. Jasper, our Danish ringleader, contributed to my education by exposing me to the seedier parts of Bogotá. He took me downtown, right off the Universidad de los Andes, to a place called Quiebra Canto. From the outside, it looked like the washroom in "Trainspotting," but with a worn-out velvet rope and a $10 cover charge. The inside, however, was pure dynamite. Wednesday night was when young people took the run-down salsa club hostage and turned it into a coolhunter's fantasy come true. Kids with three story-high afros and pissed-drunk architecture students pogo-danced to modern exotica ranging from Angelique Kidjo to, you guessed it, Manu Chao. When I wasn't in the middle of everything, I was perched by the bar, congealed with absolute bliss by the magic cave I had found.

Bogotá had a low-key brilliance that most oversized cities lacked and that manifested in a DJ called Sidestepper. Also known as Richard Blair, Sidestepper decamped to the Colombian capital from London in the late '90s and set off riptides in the underground scene. By straddling the traditional Caribbean soundscape and the disjointed bpm's of British drum & bass, he came up with a richly layered EP, "Logozo," which was both marketable and ingenious. Two or so years down the line, a parallel permutation is blowing up from another unlikely South American country—Brazil. São Paolo native DJ Patife, who christened his project "drum & bossa," softens the militant breakbeats of the idiosyncratic subgenre with balmy salsa and touches of Batucada. Tracing the lines of my reconnaissance, I used those encounters as badges to complement my evolution as a gourmet music addict.

CLANDESTINO

NO MENTIRA. Manu Chao is the backpacker's favorite

Jetset sounds

Borders always look so finite on a map; real life is more malleable. I wouldn't have had those soul-altering experiences if I had limited myself to the manufactured sheen of the mainstream. One of my best friends in Canada is a girl named Prageet, who was born in Algeria to East Indian parents, but was raised in England. In between classes, I'd bug her about sitars, tablas and arranged marriages—stuff that most Bollywood dreams are made of. So it made me maniacally happy to notice an influx of Indian vibes on a few jams I've heard lately. Nitin Sawhney, a British producer who was never preoccupied with the notion of race in music, takes the tabla and melds it with Stevie Wonder-like vocals on the spine-chilling "Rainfall." An even more eclectic expedition into the back alleys of the past yields "Beware of the Boyz," a prime cut from Punjabi MC. Generously sampling the "Knight Rider" theme and featuring vocals by Labh Janhua and Jay-Z, this track is at the forefront of England's emerging bhangra-infused rdb (rhythm dhol bass) scene.

William James, Father of American Psychology, said, "As you think, so shall you be." Picturing the indelible effect of this quotation on my musical preferences, I hope to one day become like Gilles Peterson, an esteemed music selector with dizzying tastemaking powers. He also hosts Radio 1's "Worldwide," the sickest and slickest show in the UK. After hitting upon this esoteric manna from heaven, I couldn't bear to listen to any more biteless, soulless pop. My brain has stretched to super husky dimensions and I don't think it can ever shrink back to its previous size. This transcendental detachment would probably make Siddhartha, or Tom Cruise, weep with pride.

Christmastime stretch

More than a throwback to the year that just zipped by, I tend to cleanse my palate during the Christmastime stretch to prepare for the ear caviar that's just around the corner. As a self-improvement machine on autopilot, my gaze is firmly set on far-flung Edens such as Africa and New Zealand. In the coming years, I believe those hothouses will produce more exquisite souvenirs apart from Baaba Maal, Cesaria Evora and Cheb Mami on one hand; and The Datsuns, Bic Runga and Anika Moa on the other. I also plan to augment my urban ethnic music anthology with Denmark's Morjac, Mexico's Julieta Venegas and more Talib Kweli remixes. But the biggest avalanche of inspiration I'm bracing myself for comes from the Philippines. Genre-busting talents like Domino and Squid 9 have stirred up my interest and I'd like them to be part of my phat global roster as well.

Rock en Español vanguards Aterciopelados dispensed Antoine de Saint-Exupery-style warrior wisdom on "El Estuche." They sang, "*Mira la esencia, no las apariencias* (Look into the essence of something, not at the surface)." Now that the planet is accepting globalization as a fact—and shaking its booty to a tapestry of transcultural confections—this heads up couldn't have been more appropriate.

I tend to cleanse my palate during the Christmas time stretch to prepare for the ear caviar that's just around the corner

PHAT GLOBAL #1

HOP ON. Welcome to the global caravan

Seeing red

OUT THE WINDOW

Tals Diaz

I ONCE queued up for the ATM on a typical lunch hour, behind two attractive, well-dressed girls, one of whom was munching away on potato chips. To keep my mind occupied, I allowed my thoughts to drift on to fast food kimchi, yet I snapped right back to reality when, to my utter horror, the potato chip-chomping chick casually tossed the empty snack bag onto the floor! To add salt to a bleeding wound, there was a trash can half the size of the cash machine right beside her.

I tried to rein my anger in, for defying one of my personal Ten Commandments on how to live a beautiful life: "Only the ugly litter." So I tapped the girl on the shoulder, admittedly a little harder than necessary, and asked in the calmest possible way: "Did you just throw your garbage on the floor? Even if there's a trash can right there?" Surprised, the girl looked at me and mockingly replied, "No." That was what lit the WMD fuse in my system. All my imagined Zen-like chill flew out the window, and I irately told her, "So I *imagined* the whole thing? You think I'm blind? I can't believe you're even attempting to *lie* to me!!! Are you waiting for your *yaya* to pick up after you?" I guess my public outburst confounded her, so she sheepishly retrieved her rubbish and threw it in the bin. As they walked away (leaving the ATM free at least) I heard her friend said, "I told you."

Days later, I was still dwelling on that little episode, feeling a little guilty for embarrassing the girl that way. I asked my personal psychiatrists, a.k.a., my closest friends, if I had done the right thing. One said I didn't have to do embarrass her like that, a few others said they would have done the same thing, and another said more people should speak up against such public misbehavior.

JOLLY old Jack Nicholson, anger management specialist

Piss-list

I must confess that for someone who sincerely wants to live out a levelheaded, cool-as-a-cucumber-in-the-fridge lifestyle, I do have a knack for losing it every now and then.

I often get infuriated in the movie theater where, no matter how many Nokia ads advise the audience to keep their cell phones on silent mode, certain worms still refuse to take heed. As such, earsplitting ringtones ranging from "Cheeky Girl" to "Jingle Bells" manage to intrude into key portions of the film, like when Keanu is about to deliver intelligent dialogue (and we all know these instances are few and far between). Twisting the blade further, some even have the cheek to take the calls, as though no one else was around.

Other items on my recent piss list: I once seethed when I saw an amused mother allowing her kid to urinate right outside the mall, en face to horrified shoppers passing by! Oh, and hell hath no fury than me aggravated by traffic cops awkwardly concealing proposals of bribery after flagging me down by saying, "Ma'am, *may ibang paraan* ..." Come to think of it, maybe I should consider giving ol' Jack Nicholson a call and ask him to move in with me for some extreme Anger Management measures.

For someone who wants to live out a cool-as-a-cucumber-in-the-fridge lifestyle, I certainly have a knack for losing it now and then

Hot tips

A helpful little adventure manual, "The Traveler's Guide to Hell," by Dana Facaros and Michael Pauls, offers an interesting piece of advice regarding the sin of Anger. It says this is the one sin that most likely harm other people, especially when boosted by another sin. Mixing anger with envy, for example, results in armed robbery.

For the angry tourist thinking of visiting the netherworld for the next eternity (I hear it's all the rage for certain officials in government), yet another seasoned scribe with a preference for hot destinations, Dante, claims there's a great view of the River Styx in the designated 5th circle. There, you'll enjoy the company of some sizzling girls named Medusa and the Furies, right before you get dismembered alive for your ways on earth.

I try to keep these bits of info in mind especially now that I've achieved Step One in my personal anger management therapy—admitting I have a problem. But is expressing anger always a wrong thing? Is anger really a hard-nosed player in the starting seven lineup of Team Vice? I also happen to know that the 5th circle is reserved for the sullen, or those too wimpy to act on their anger at injustices witnessed.

Far too many times, we witness atrocious behavior in public. This is not limited by social strata. We see pedestrians ignoring traffic signs; smoke-belching vehicles; people cutting in line or spitting; or restaurant patrons treating waiters rudely. Yet so many times do we fail to become angry enough to correct such unwarranted actions, perhaps in the name of saving face, or worse, resigning ourselves to such passive behavior because we're just so used to the shabby state of affairs. We then become guilty of complacency. We seem cursed by two words particular to our culture that attempt to absolve guilt: "*Bahala na*"—leave it to God. Not realizing that even a spark neglected can burn a house down.

Thus, I am fully convinced that vice also lies in a deficiency of anger. The poet Dylan Thomas once penned to "Rage against the dying of the light." When we accept appalling things as part of everyday life, do we not become shadows in the darkness as well? Where would we be today if Rizal wasn't angry enough to channel his noble ire into words? The fact that we feel rage means a higher ideal within us has been challenged. Yet it shouldn't end with inaction. Real change must be the agenda.

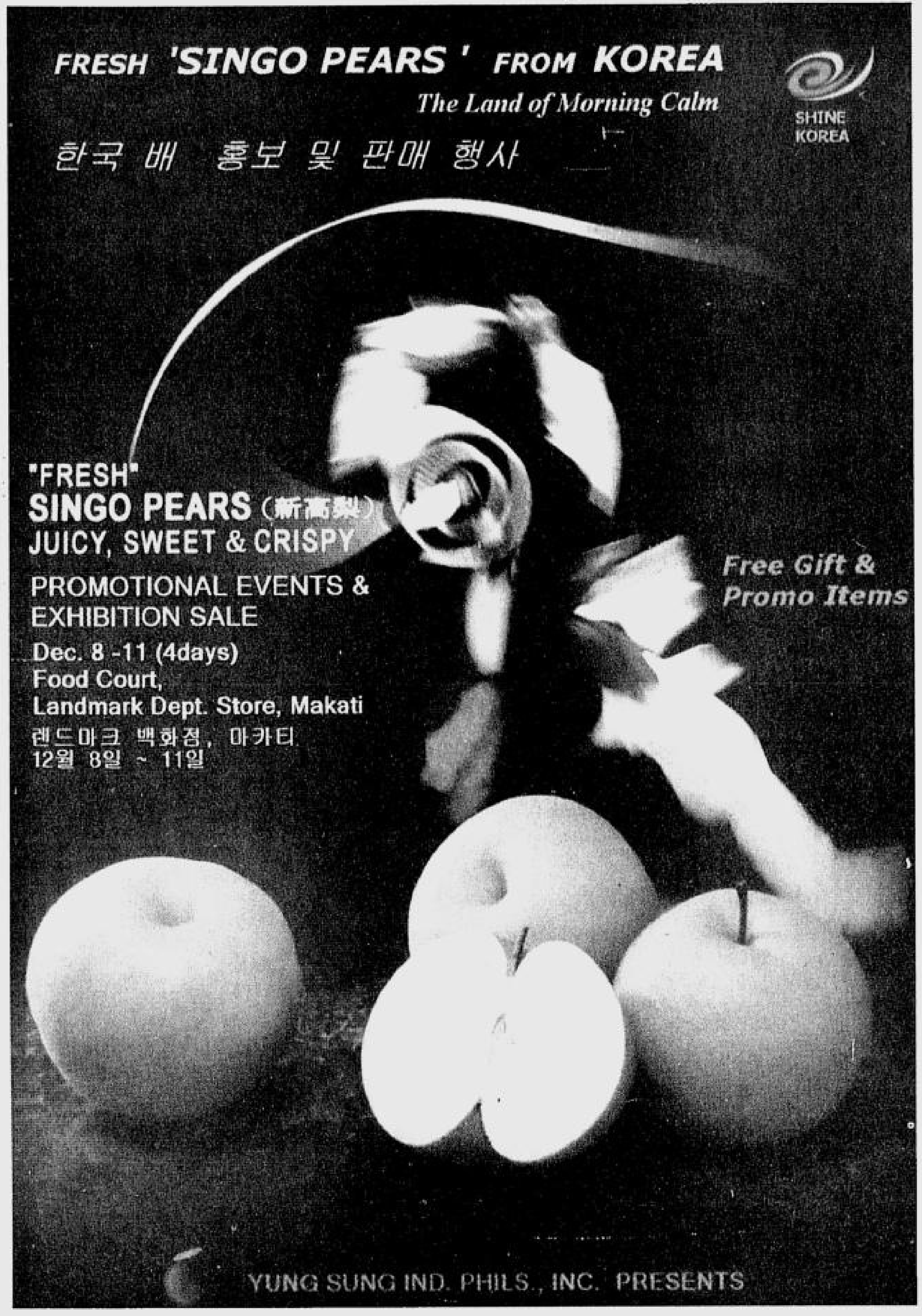
Cool fire

I'm not saying we should all become angry people, infuriated by every gross encounter, rampaging in the name of righteousness. Anger can be expressed in non-violent ways (hello, Gandhi!). It *is* possible to act out anger with some degree of serenity. We once proved that a revolution need not be carried out with bloodshed. Perhaps our challenge today is to demonstrate that a revolution doesn't need a minimum number. A revolution can happen with one.

A few days ago, I witnessed a well-heeled restaurant manager in Malate hitting two little boys hard on the head with a rolled up newspaper, for selling roses to customers dining outside. The faces of the guests gave away their disapproval at the manager's behavior, yet no one dared say a word. A friend of mine instinctively shielded the two boys and bought three roses from each of them. She then quietly went up to the manager when no one was looking. My friend gave her one rose and said, "*Miss, naman, bata lang sila.*" The manager realized her mistake and apologized, saying that she was just looking after the guests. I was astounded at my friend's ability to express her displeasure in such a tranquil way, especially since I was ready to kill my cigarette on the manager's hand.

Perhaps I still have a long way to go in learning how to light candles instead of setting off dynamite.

(E-mail the author at: inca_orange@yahoo.com)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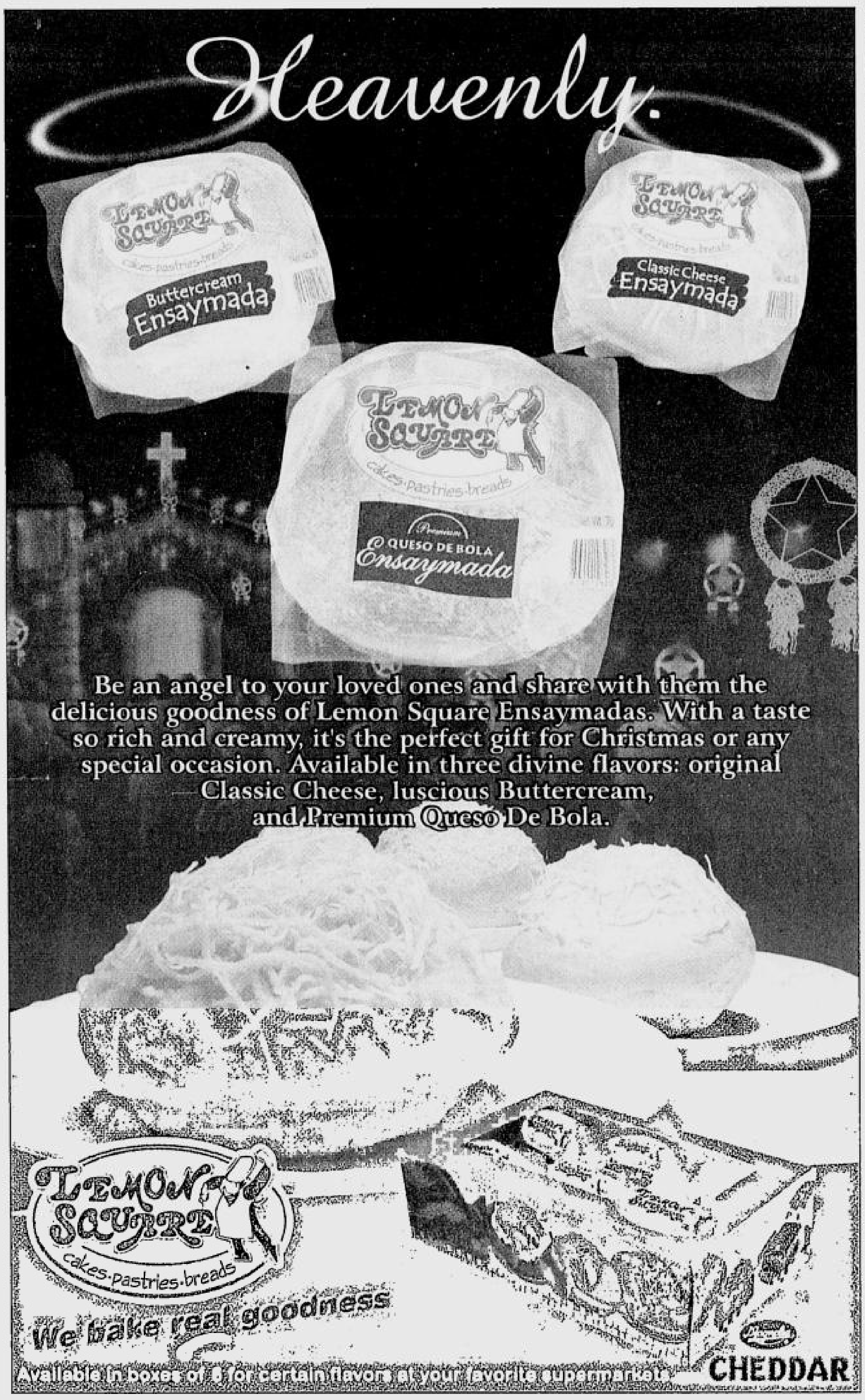
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AFTER HOURS

Compiled by Adrian Cuenca

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 06: ELECTROCUSHION with Jim Masters (Base, UK) (Techno) @ Halo, Mile Long U, Rustan's: 6-9 p.m., Manolet Dario (House, Progressive house)
Teakbar, Power Plant, Rockwell: Hypnotiq Saturdays (deep & funky house tunes) with TC, Mark Naval and Erwin Edralin
Nuvo: Electrolounge with Scrambled Edge and Don Renato (jazz, Brasilia and broken beat)
Acquario: Erwin Edralin (deep & funky house)
Dreambar: Circo Loco with Manolet Dario (House, Progressive house)
Temple: Martin Pulgar (house)
Absinth: Pump with Joe Henzon & Carlo Ching (tech-house)
Tiananmen Bar and Resto: Couch Culture by Couch Lab (chill Out, balearic)
Wasabi: Saturd80's, New wave and dance music from the era with DJ Luis and DJ Jojo
Fidel: Velvet Mafia with Cocoy Puyat and Bingo Ang (house)

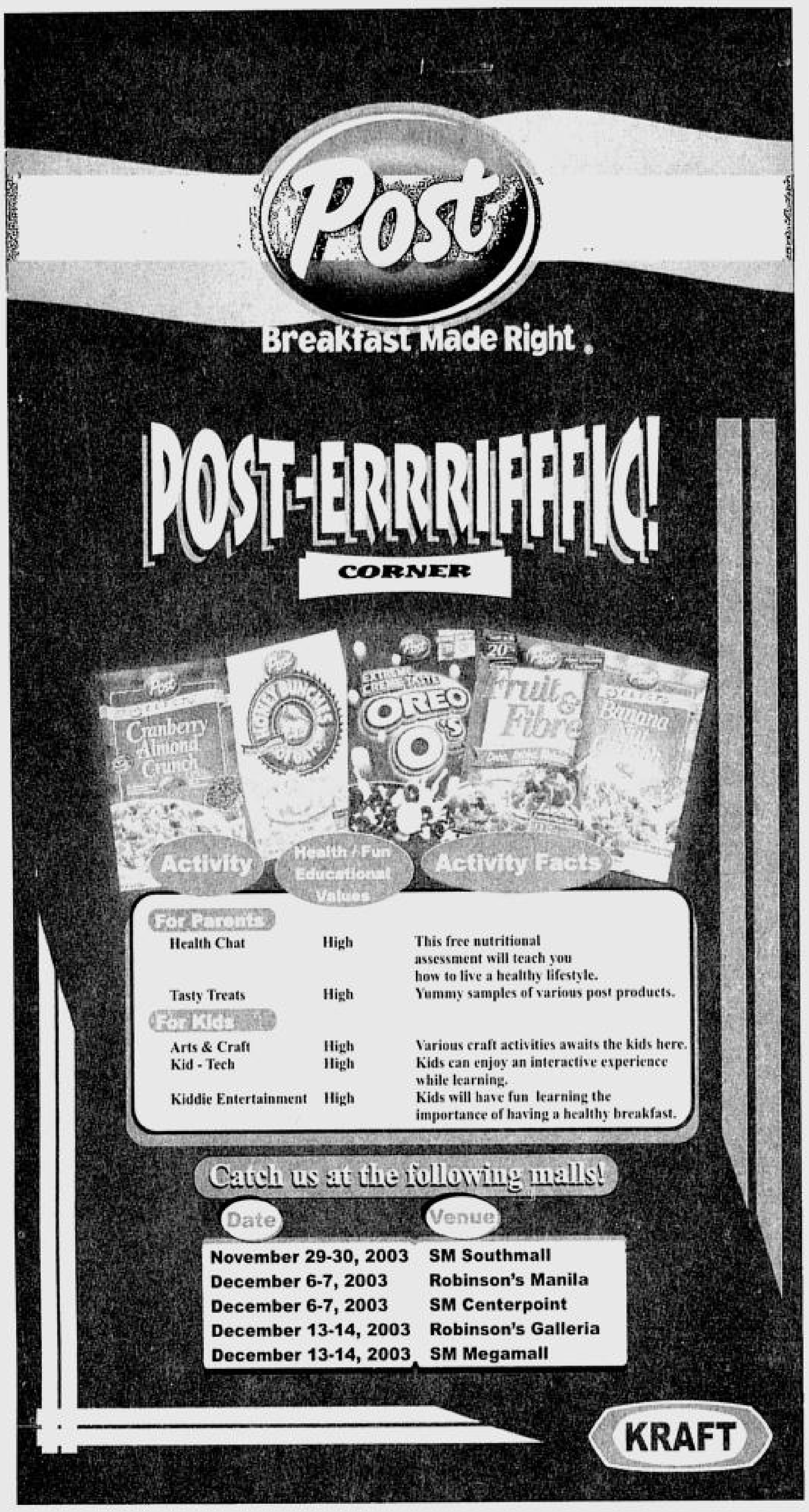
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 09:
Temple: Goodlife Tuesdays with Steve Mills & Paolo Cabalfin (R&B)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10:
Absinth: Smooth Wednesdays with Steve Mills (R&B, hip hop)
Olive: Syrup with Lester Castillo (R&B) and guest DJs
Bora Bar: Manolet Dario (progressive house)
Bed Bar, Libis: DJ Luis (new wave)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11:
Temple: Yin Yang, a sonic fusion of RnB and House music with Kevin Ruiz.
Azzurro: Plush Thursdays with Steve Mills (r&b)
Bykes Cafe: DJ Luis (retro '70s to '90s)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12:
Restaurant 12: 12 after 12 with Chip de la Calzada (sexy, deep house and lounge) & Adrian Cuenca (chill, electro lounge)
Dreambar: Decadance with Boyet Almazan ('80s and '90s)
Wasabi: Vibe Fridays with Steve Mills (r&b)
Acquario: Erwin Edralin (Deep & funky house).
Tiananmen Bar and Resto: Couch Culture by Couch Lab (Chill Out, Balearic)

For your gigs to be published email adrian@djconspiracy.com by Wednesday afternoon.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Breakfast Made Right.

POST-ERRRIFFFIC! CORNER

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For Parents		
Health Chat	High	This free nutritional assessment will teach you how to live a healthy lifestyle.
Tasty Treats	High	Yummy samples of various post products.
For Kids		
Arts & Craft	High	Various craft activities awaits the kids here.
Kid - Tech	High	Kids can enjoy an interactive experience while learning.
Kiddie Entertainment	High	Kids will have fun learning the importance of having a healthy breakfast.

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December 6-7, 2003	Robinson's Manila
December 6-7, 2003	SM Centerpoint
December 13-14, 2003	Robinson's Galleria
December 13-14, 2003	SM Megamall

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Judged in the presence of a DTI Representative on November 14, 2003. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0565, Series of 2003

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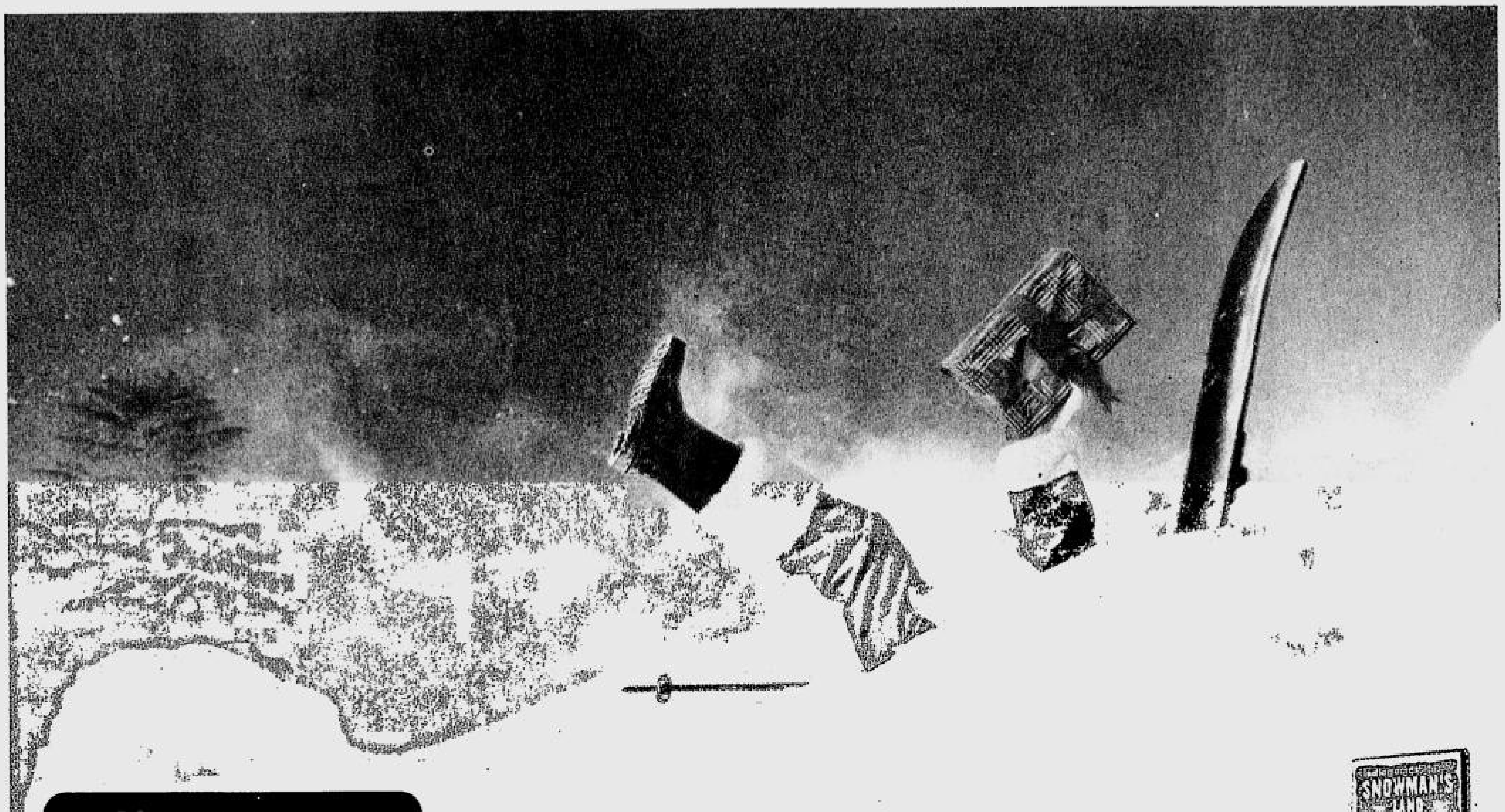

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SNOWMAN

URI-NATION

By Martin Valdes

IMAGINE Paradise. A virgin planet before the advent of civilization and technology, Earth is a newborn baby swaddled in brilliant colors, untouched by a past and oblivious to the future. Flora and fauna abound in riotous revelry and all of creation celebrates, for Bathala has molded man and woman in His image. One is a pillar of strength, his partner the embodiment of beauty.

Together, walking hand in unsullied hand, they survey the vast domain, their divine inheritance. But all that time cramped within the confines of a bamboo stalk has had a profound physiological effect on man. Now, with a chilly breeze tickling his naked parts, he turns to the first tree he comes upon, a magnificent acacia with branches like veins of the sky, and urinates on it. An enraged Bathala reminds him that the Tree of Knowledge is not a commode, and casts him out of Paradise. To commemorate his fall from grace, man builds the first public urinal.

An excerpt from Legends of the Stall, by my own fermented imagination. While that was fiction, there is sufficient historical evidence to support the fact that public urinals are one of the oldest human inventions. Less celebrated than the Guttenberg printing press, less romanticized than the wheel, less cataclysmic than gunpowder, and less lavish than the silk loom, the urinal is nevertheless considered the silent sidekick that has accompanied man throughout history. Whether sculpted in exquisite porcelain by a master craftsman, or crudely shoveled into shape by a desperate wino, the urinal is a necessity and a refuge for the weary traveler seeking solace and relief from the world around him, and the bladder within him.

Disturbing the piss

The Philippines has endured much controversy in the year 2003: insurgency, social unrest, political exposés, kidnappings, the Bush visit, a wilting currency and Joey Marquez courting sympathy from the amused masses. Add to these the public urinals installed by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority—as if the citizens of this beleaguered country did not have enough to debate about. Why the fracas concerning something quite insignificant compared to other national concerns, we might ask? What does this mean in the context of the Filipino psyche? And will city walls feel neglected henceforth? These are questions that cannot wait for the next commercial break.

The middle of the year saw the erection of 173 public urinals along major thoroughfares. MMDA chair Bayani Fernando says it was to promote hygiene by giving men an alternative to urinating just anywhere in public.

KUBETAMAX!

Each urinal has its own septic tank to store waste and prevent it from directly polluting the metropolis' water system. Made of aluminum sheets painted a hot pink, the MMDA claim that the design is also built to "withstand vandalism." I'm not sure what that means. The color probably fools vandals into thinking they could do no worse. Aside from the aesthetic, the cost of each urinal has likewise been the subject of much discussion. At P40,000 a pisser, one just has to wonder how much technology could possibly be involved in constructing a semi-circular booth of aluminum with a rubber funnel and a septic tank. That's a pretty expensive science project.

Of course the project is not without merit. The concept of public urinals is anything but ludicrous, and almost all civilized nations have them. The most obvious benefit is decency. Given a choice between an unforgiving wall and a private stall, the Pinoy will invariably choose the stall—unless it is an election year and the wall is adorned with campaign posters. As we never had accessible public urinals in the past, the Pinoy has grown accustomed to swallowing his pride and relieving himself in public. Once, while I was residing in the United States, I took a visitor from Manila with me on a golf game. On the fourth hole, he walked over to some bushes and urinated right there—on the golf course where Tiger Woods had won his first professional tournament. I was mortified. But my companion simply tucked in, zipped up and proceeded to play an excellent round.

Public hygiene is also a strong plus. While golf courses and the like may actually use some liquid fertilizing, city streets are not likely to. Asphalt neither absorbs nor breaks down the dangerous chemicals in urine, surrendering it instead to our already dubious water systems. The next time you take a shower, try not to remember this article. We also have to contend with an odor of formidable putridity and resilience. The stench of urine, while comfortably familiar in the horse tracks of Baguio, is an unwelcome phantom haunting the corridors of Manila.

Best of all, our public urinals are free. Unlike the common-use toilets of first world nations, the MMDA has anticipated that peripatetic Filipinos will not spend money on a natural bodily process. Even if a mere P5 separates the wall and the stall, many will opt for free relief.

Urine trouble

But debate continues despite these convincing arguments. As stated earlier, the finished product does not seem to justify the production costs. Many have also suggested a whiff of corruption, and the MMDA is quick to counter that politics (once again) are at the root of these rumors. In some areas, the residents have gone as far as removing the urinals in protest of ... well, I'm not sure what, exactly. Suffice to say, many seemed pissed off.

Also, the question of sexist preference has been brought up. Unlike public urinals abroad which are unisex, the MMDA has exclusively erected male urinals. Men need them more, it has said in defense, citing bladder sizes and other anatomical discrepancies between the genders. That may be true, but wouldn't it have been more convenient just the same to have unisex stalls? For every 50 men who have used a stall while waiting for a bus, I'm sure there are at least two women who wished the same convenience was available to them. It's like we've given Clark Kent a place to change into Superman; what about Darna?

(A little aside: I have noticed several vehicles parked on the side of EDSA, their drivers using the urinals. This is dangerous. I'm all for the comfortable driver, but pulling over on metro's main highway while three-ton buses hurtle

URI-NATION/ H4

More reasons to be very merry.

SNOWMAN Be Santa's big helper.
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Michael De Mesa

Age: It's ok.
The thing I love most about what I do is ...the fulfillment I get.
People might be surprised to know that I...am poor.
I wish when I started I'd been told that... showbiz is strange.
The most important lesson I've learned is... never to give up.
I get emotional when I... am surprised. A lot of things get me emotional.
I laugh loudest when I...really am in a good mood.
My Super! Saturday night ... is spent with my loved ones.
My vote goes to... hmmm.
The path that led me to this... leads me to what?
The secret to surviving in Manila is...being rich and powerful.
I gave the best performance of my life ... I'd like to think I always give my best.
If I could piss on someone, that would be ... hmmm.
If I were the most powerful person in the country, I would...stop corruption. And make ultimate frisbee the national sport.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say...how would I know what they'll say?
The world would be a better place if...Jesus is in our hearts.
The things that make my life worth living are... the people I love. My boys and my Hana.
My greatest hope for the future is...for me, that I will always be happy and healthy. For the country, no more corruption.

Jett Panga

Age: 35
The thing I love most ab
People might be surpris
complete my morning ri
I wish when I started I'd
The most important less
I get emotional when I...
I laugh loudest when I...
My Super! Saturday nig
My vote goes to... Bozo
The path that led me to
The secret to surviving i
I gave the best performa
daughter. I didn't faint.
If I could piss on someo
If I were the most power
When I'm gone, they'll
The world would be a be
The thing that makes my
My greatest hope for the

Toilet humor on stage

Photos by Jake Versoza

TO PEE or not to pee, that is the question. And when you have to pay in order to pee, the question on hand becomes a plot. The show is "Urinetown," which opened last night at the RCBC Theater to a full house of laughter-loving patrons of Atlantis Productions.

Bobby Garcia, the red velvet curtain's "it" boy who is responsible for bringing this production from Broadway to Manila, has this to say about his new show: "The material is one of the most unique and exciting pieces of theater I have ever come across." That's a bladder-load, coming from him.

The story unfolds when the owner of "public amenities," Caldwell B. Caldwell, expertly played by Michael de Mesa, imposes fees stiff enough to piss people off (pun intended). And you cannot relieve yourself just anywhere, either—if they catch you, they kill you.

It explodes when, all of a sudden, public amenity number nine dweller Bobby Strong (the charming Noel Rayos) rebels against public amenity owner Caldwell. What ensues is a musical parody of errors that touches everything from politics to corruption, love and relationships—something we can all relate to as Filipinos.

This Super! spread features the lead cast in various states of "urine-nation," with photographer Jake Versoza capturing their "pee-k" moments.

"Urinetown" just might make you wet your pants.

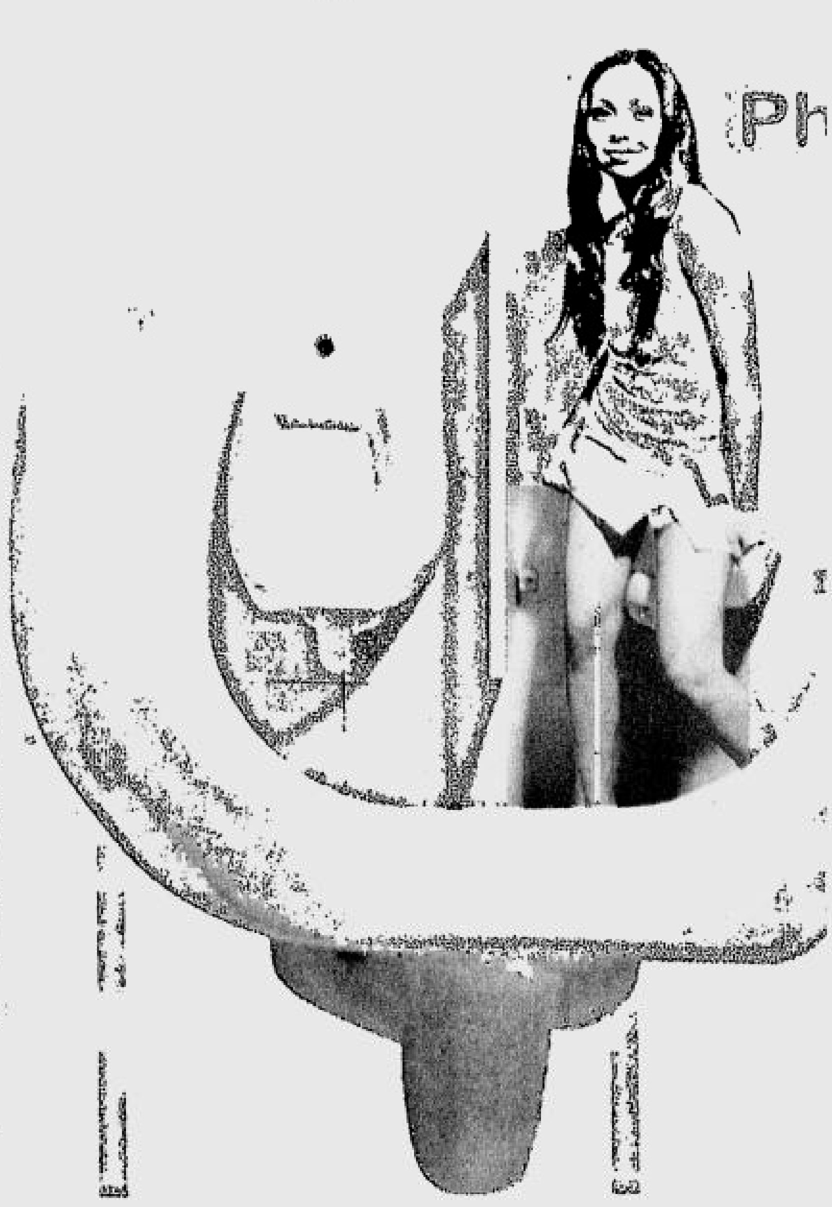
Don't forget to flush.

(For tickets, call Atlantis Productions, 892-7078; or Ticketworld 891-5610)

Tim Yap

Noel Rayos

Age: Peter Pan
The thing I love most about what I do is ...sexy groupies. Yeah, yeah.
People might be surprised to know that I...am actually a sensitive guy.
I wish when I started I'd been told that... life is full of choices.
The most important lesson I've learned is... to put on my socks one at a time.
I get emotional when I... act in Urinetown.
I laugh loudest when I...think about who to vote for next year.
My Super! Saturday night happens... duh.
My vote goes to... see two questions before this.
The path that led me to this... Buendia corner Ayala.
The secret to surviving in Manila is...having an SUV and a fat bank account.
I gave the best performance of my life during... Urinetown auditions.
If I could piss on someone, that would be...no one. I'm a nice guy. *Charing.*
If I was the most powerful person in the country, I would...mandate theater viewing for all schools.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say..."Clone him." "Harvest his organs."
The world would be a better place if...people kept their word and followed the golden rule.
The thing that makes my life worth living is... filling out questionnaires.
My greatest hope for the future is... to have one where no man will be denied of his essential humanity because of the condition of his pocketbook, where no man in need will be ignored by another with the means to help him. Here and now, because of love, we will look upon the faces of our fellow man and see not just a brother but a sister as well.



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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ut what I do is ...I get paid doing what I love to do.

d to know that I...feel awkward during the day if I don't als.

been told that... not everyone in this business is honest.

on I've learned is... not everyone in this business is honest.

see old people begging for money.

to something idiotic and get away with it.

t happens when... I'm happily drunk.

e Clown.

his...profession has been one heck of a ride.

Manila is...keeping a cool head.

nce of my life ...watching my wife give birth to our

e, that would be... a whole lotta piss.

ul person in the country, I would...pave every road.

robably say...he was an interesting guy.

tter place if...everyone was selfless.

life worth living is... life itself.

future is... a BMWX5

thy Azanza

24

ing I love most about what I do is ...performing ome of the most respected actors in the industry.

e might be surprised to know that I... am a Matrix and love all the kung-fu stuff.

when I started I'd been told that... stage fright goes away!!!

ost important lesson I've learned is... theater s make the work all the more worthwhile—plus ome in handy for quick changes.

motional when I... trip on anything sappy.

h loudest when I...get together with my best s.

uper! Saturday night happens when... I find a fun people to spend it with—and a great outfit helps ood.

te goes to... Topper Fabregas.

ath that led me to this ... is a mystery!

ecret to surviving in Manila is ... having a cell- e, a 4X4 and a good pair of jeans.

the best performance of my life during ... can't quite one performance, there are many memorable ones.

uld piss on someone, that would be...not my

re the most powerful person in the country, I ...outlaw traffic.

I'm gone, they'll probably say...now that was one who wore every possible hairstyle.

orld would be a better place if...there were a bet- ce for the world.

ings that make my life worth living are... friends, , potato chips and being able to do what I do.

eatest hope for the future is... to know I actually ne!

ona Baranda

Age: 26

The thing I love most about what I do is ...becoming someone I can never be in real life.

People might be surprised to know that I...have three kids already!

I wish when I started I'd been told that... I should have listened to my mother.

The most important lesson I've learned is... never count the chicks until they're hatched.

I get emotional when I... suck.

I laugh loudest when I...suck.

My Super! Saturday night happens... I suck.

My vote goes to... Topper Fabregas for Tourism Secretary, for pruning and greening the Philippines.

The path that led me to this... was my mom showing me a picture of myself singing "Bakit Ba Ganyan" when I was three.

The secret to surviving in Manila is...tear gas!

I gave the best performance of my life during...the birth of my three kids.

If I could piss on someone, that would be...you know who you are. He-he.

If I were the most powerful person in the country, I would...turn this country into a British colony.

When I'm gone, they'll probably say...yes! We can get all her rackets na.

The world would be a better place if...all the continents were connected and there were no boundaries.

The things that make my life worth living are... my kids and my family.

My greatest hope for the future is... success for my children and everyone else's children. He-he.

Jinky Llamanzares

Age: 34

The thing I love most about what I do is ...when people love it in return.

People might be surprised to know that I...am poor.

I wish when I started I'd been told... to not start at all.

I get emotional when... people don't laugh at my jokes.

I laugh loudest when...people notice that I answer my own questions.

My Super! Saturday night happens... I just stay.

My vote goes to... nobody.

The path that led me to this... was after I woke up this morning.

The secret to surviving in Manila is...to not live in Manila at all.

I gave the best performance of my life during...parental guidance is advised.

If I could piss on someone, that would be...Adolf Hitler.

If I were the most powerful person in the country, I would... I would pass on the responsibility to a more powerful person.

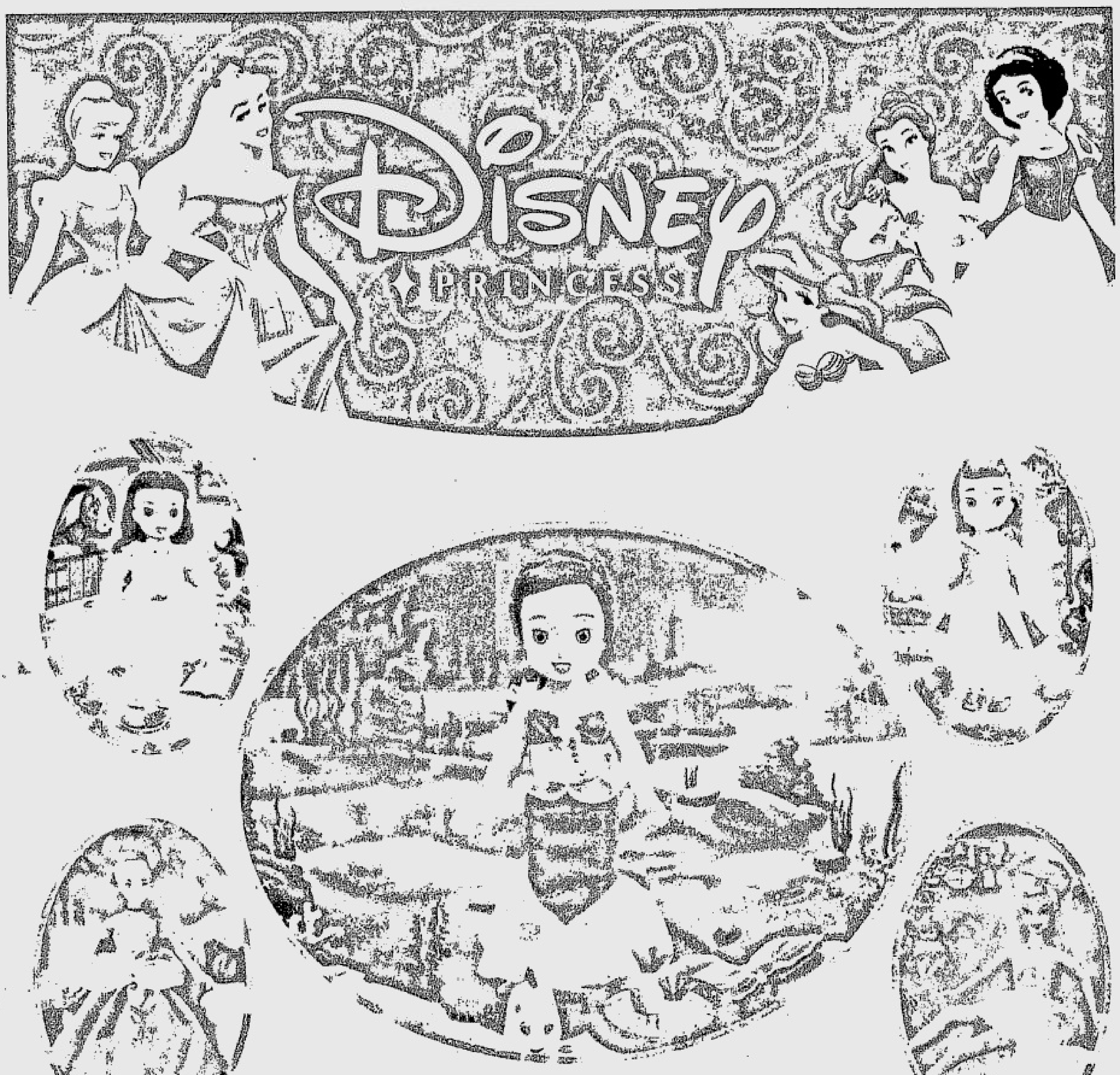
When I'm gone, they'll probably say ... the silence is deafening.

The world would be a better place if ... cellphones were not invented.

The thing that makes my life worth living is ... the thought that my family is behind me.

My greatest hope for the future is ... to hope for a greater future.

Special thanks to the staff of RCBC Plaza



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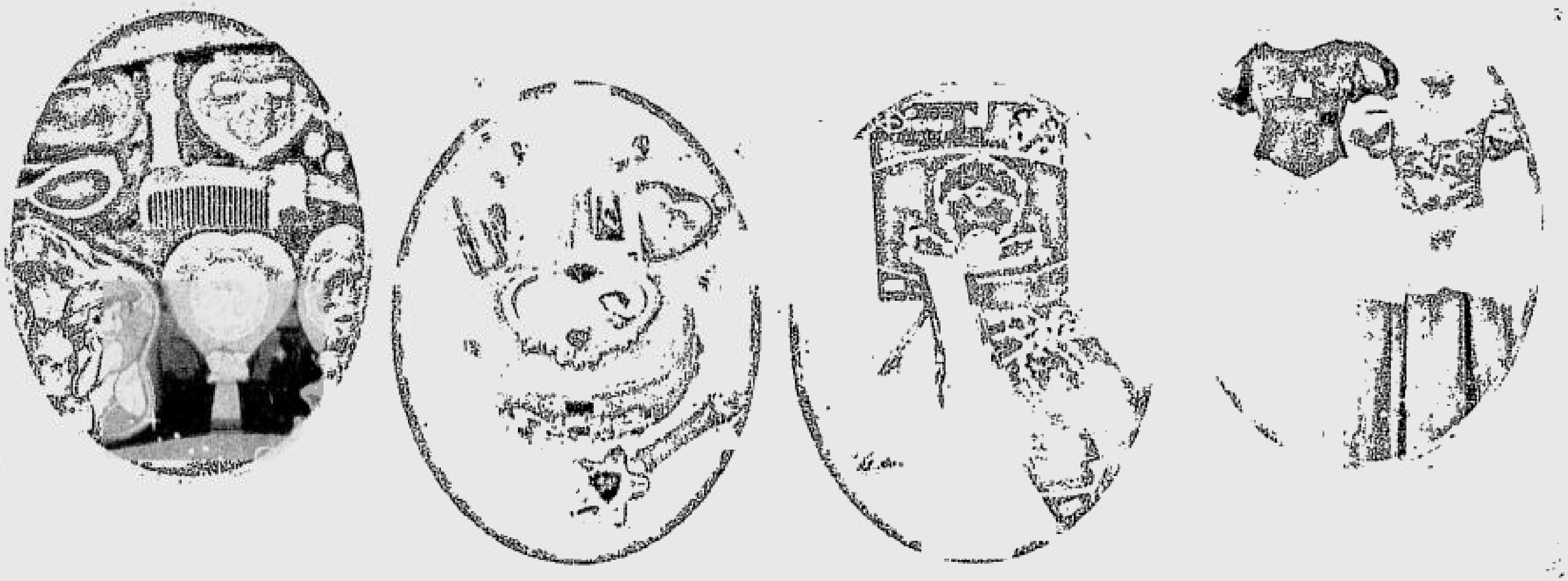

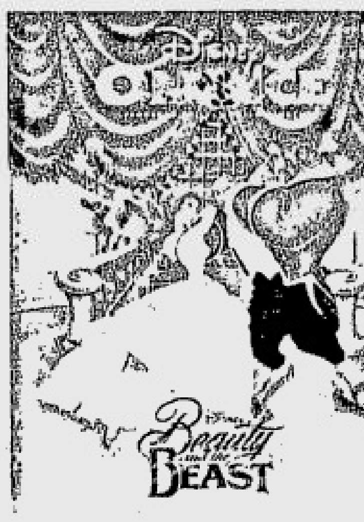

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Writings on the wall

SWAK!

by Lex

AS I took a pee in a public bathroom a few days ago, I saw the sign.

It stared me in the face, as though waiting to be reacted to.

In big, bold letters it asked: WHY ARE YOU LOOKING HERE? ARE YOU ASHAMED OF IT?

Since the beginning of time man has defaced the walls around him with messages for his fellow man. Cavemen drew pictures of the food they hunted … probably to distract them from hunger on days that they came home empty-handed. Likewise, in every single security guardhouse hung a calendar with a photograph of the the latest bold star, to keep the men awake and daydreaming.

Do graffiti on public bathroom walls reflect the country's current mindset? If so, is it an accurate reflection of the times?

Generation gap

In the 1960s, when sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll flourished, the international symbol for peace was plastered on every T-shirt, wall, and VW van. "Make love, not war!" was the battlecry.

From the '70s to the '80s, Pinoy activism grew as leftists quietly plotted against the evil empire headed by the Big McCoy. University of the Philippines campuses sported graffiti galore egging the populace to plot against the dictatorship. "*Makibaka, huwag matakot!*" was chanted in the streets and scribbled by brave souls on public walls in the middle of the night.

By the time Ninoy Aquino was assassinated in '86, the seeds of change had been planted. Along with yellow ribbons on trees and posts everywhere, exhortations on city walls expressed overwhelming sentiments— "*Tama na! Sobra na! Palitan na!*" "*Hindi ka nag-iisa*" —and became the collective mantra of the suffering populace.

Recently, searching public bathroom walls for more signs of the times, I was disappointed (and this is an understatement) to see the same message everywhere: "For free sex, call 0919-xxxx or 0917-xxxx.

Apathy

More than anything, I hate it when people complain about the government and the lousy people in it, but when I ask, "So who are you voting for?" I get a blank look and then the mumbled excuse: "I forgot to register, eh …"

> In the 1960s, 'Peace!' and 'Make love, not war!' graffiti decorated city walls, including public toilets. Now it's, 'For free sex, call xxxx-xxx-xxxx,' especially in public toilets

A lot of people don't really care, and just hide behind the alibi that, regardless of who they vote for, the outcome would be the same anyway. I don't buy this. Surely some candidates are better than others. With someone incompetent at the helm, things would definitely deteriorate faster.

Beside "Why are you looking here? Are you ashamed of it?" was another witticism: "The future is in your hands."

Two thoughts raced to mind. First, who in heaven's name has time to think up puns to scribble on top of urinals? And then it got me thinking, the future is in my hands, indeed, and I am not going to waste it!

(For comments, e-mail author at swak@info.com.ph)

Uri-Nation

From page H1

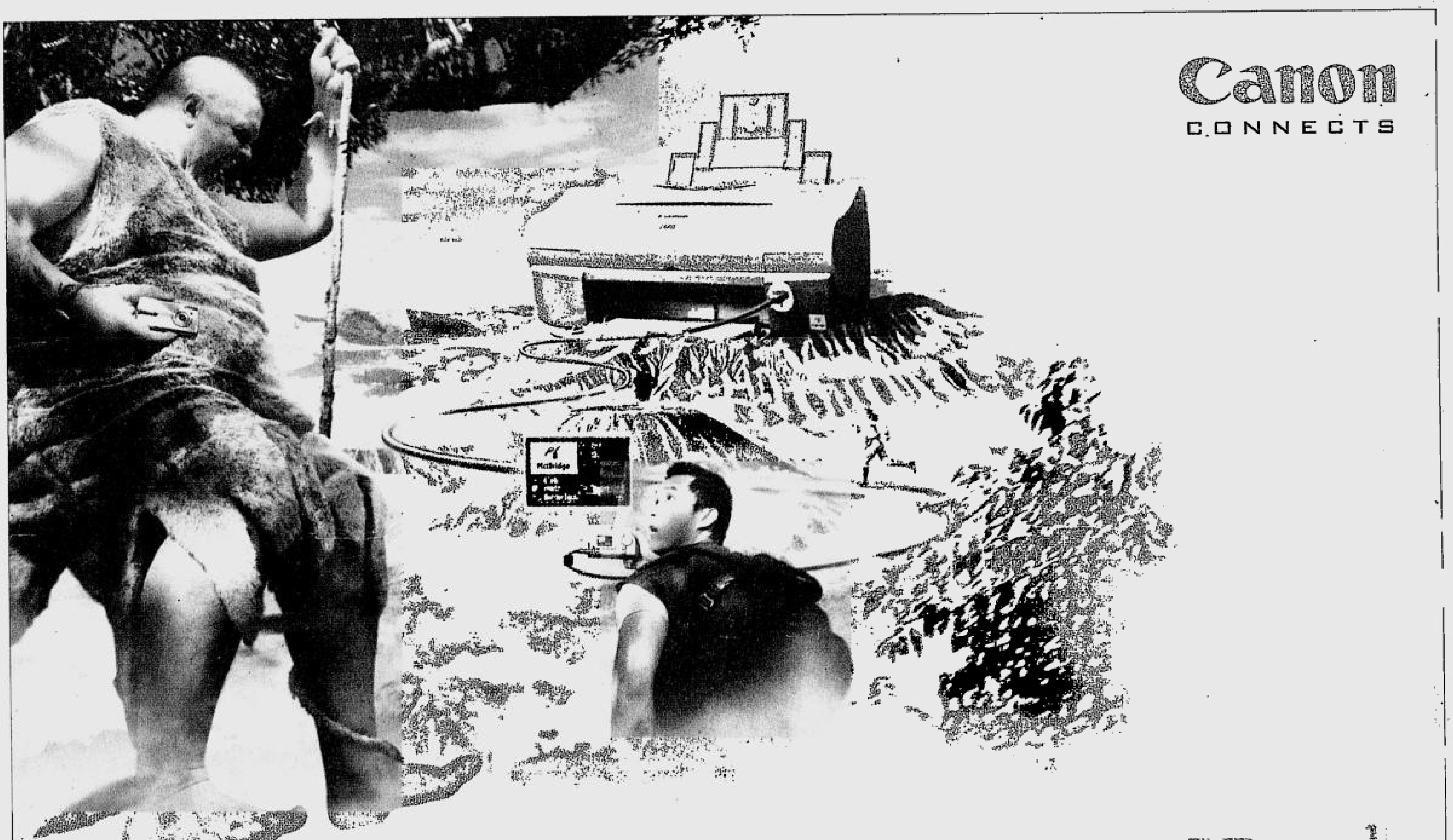
on the same lane doing 80—if I were the passenger in that cab, I'd need to use the urinal next.)

Finally, the color: a pink so livid, it scalds. Though quite incongruous for a male urinal, the MMDA chose this color for easy sighting. But sighted by whom? … a jet liner? A pedestrian isn't going to miss a public urinal unless it's been camouflaged as a telephone pole. In which case, he'll still pee on it. The debate rages …

Let us not underestimate a man's relationship with a public urinal. In restaurants and bars it is a place for renewing acquaintances. In transit stations, it is a place for meditation, where we can stare at a fixed point in the wall or enjoy philosophical graffiti scribbled by others. Herbert Hunke, mentor to beat legends such as Keruoac and Burroughs, did his best work in public urinals. Henry Miller wrote of his affection for a certain urinal in Paris. While the debate does not border on moral territory—not like we're discussing war here, just piss on earth—public urination has ever been a trademark of the Filipino man. It is a tradition worthy of consideration and revision, but for better or worse, it is a cultural trait that identifies us. There is a romance involved when a man contemplates the future that is in his hands.

So, I'm using a public urinal near the corner of EDSA and Ayala, when a bus pulls up beside me to unload several passengers. On board, a gaggle of young girls start to giggle as they catch me going about my business. Refusing to be riled, I concentrate on the task at hand. The aim of the public urinal is to promote hygiene; my aim probably helps.

E-mail author at Lasengnomad@yahoo.com.



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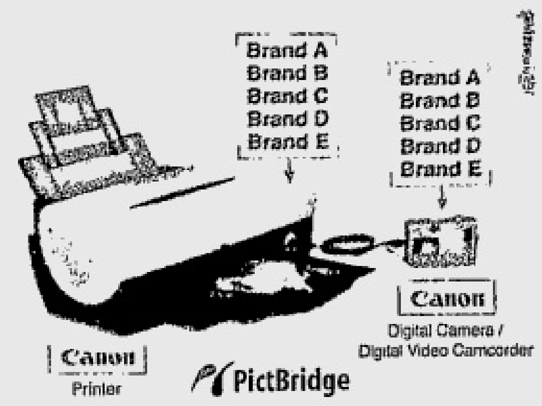

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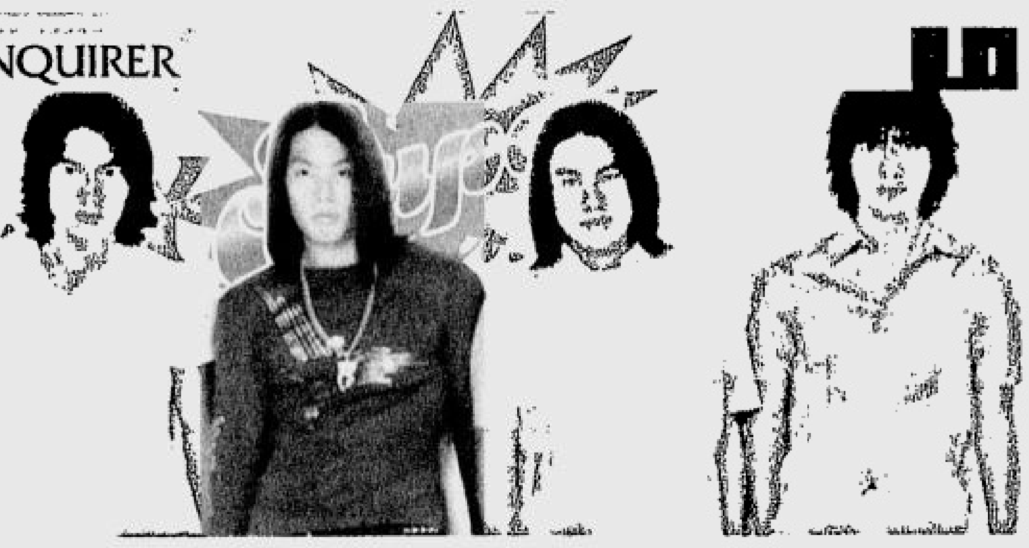

Reinventing Pinoy TV

We need not be endlessly in love with F4

By Lino Cayetano
Contributor

HOLLYWOOD movies invaded us decades ago and international pop icons from Elvis to Britney Spears have always been well-accepted, in fact idolized, by us Pinoys. Our dominant philosophical and political thoughts came from the West, and outside forces have long dictated our economic policies. We prefer imported products to our own, even as multinational companies turn us into a single consumer statistic. In short, in this country that we call our own, there is a lot that isn't ours. But like it or not, one of the few things that are truly Pinoy is local television entertainment!

You don't have to be a TV junkie to be familiar with Sunday afternoon variety shows, in which our favorite *artistas* sing and dance in elaborate production numbers that have been an industry staple from the days of Vilma, through Sharon, to today's young stars. And while soaps have long been relegated to mid-afternoon fare in other countries, we have taken pride in a soap opera-crazy viewership, from the crowds that loved Janice de Belen as "Flor de Luna," to the avid followers of Claudine Baretto and Jolina Magdangal in more current takes on real-life melodramas. In fact, it looks like soaps are here to stay. As for lunch time in this country, it has long been taken side by side with the latest gimmicks, contests, dance numbers and stunts involving both *artistas* and "lucky" fans in noontime variety shows.

Local television has produced a wide range of shows that continue to entertain us, generate money for the networks, and keep denizens of the industry employed. And though the past few years have shown a trend toward the gaining popularity of imported shows, the local industry seems unaffected. It is in fact easy to argue that these new foreign shows, from Taiwan and Korea of late, have conditioned the market to accept new ideas and innovations. They have opened homemade shows to experimentation. Aside from these "creative" benefits, it is also undeniable that these new breed of shows are big income earners for the stations.

Admittedly it takes no small effort to obtain the license for a foreign television show, dub and edit it for Filipino consumption, and sell it to a tough market. But it still entails considerably less work, and definitely less expense, than producing our own versions to rival the international shows in quality of form and content. What we "lose" in time and money, we gain in the advancement of local television.

Pinoy "show biz" may be old and strong, but it isn't perfect or fully evolved. Often overlooked is the potential advancement of the Filipino manner of storytelling, communicating ideas, and discussing relationships and issues that are close to the heart of the average Pinoy. The themes are universal—love, hope and sorrow are emotions that are understood by everyone on the planet. Still, certain things are said, heard and felt better when spoken, written, directed and acted out by artists who understand us most.

Maybe the Filipino viewer is looking for something different. Maybe they are bored with what local TV has been dishing out. Maybe they are asking for something new, something fresh, a different take from 50 years of mind-numbing melodrama. And isn't this something we can, and should be able to, produce? A healthy society is able to balance commerce and ideas. We learn a lot from watching foreign films and shows, but we shouldn't be afraid to experiment on our own.

The local entertainment industry is at a crossroads. Do we take a step forward into what is logical, inevitable and financially rewarding, or do we take a step back and assess what the phenomenon and its possible financial rewards may be doing to the very fabric of Filipino entertainment? If the Pinoy viewer is searching for something new, our entertainment industry should be up to the challenge of finding it.

Television and movies are primarily tools of entertainment, but they are also potent tools of thought and ideas.

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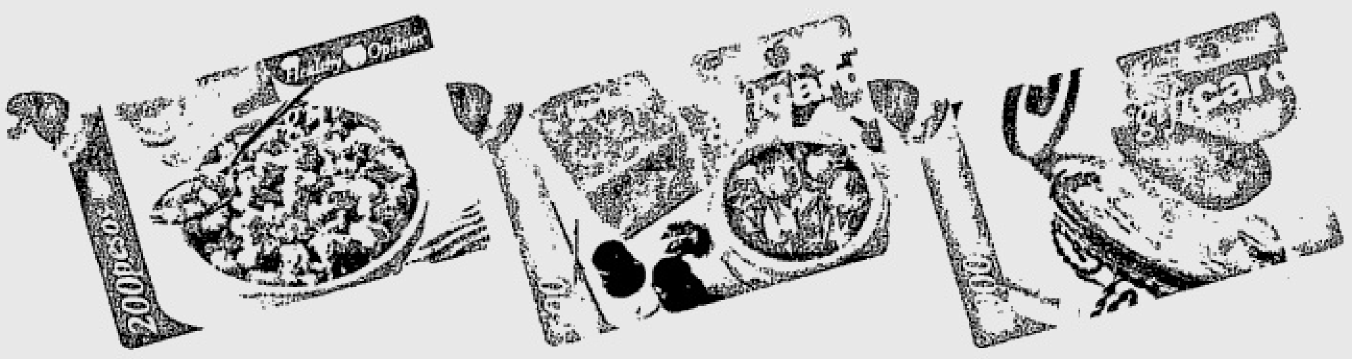

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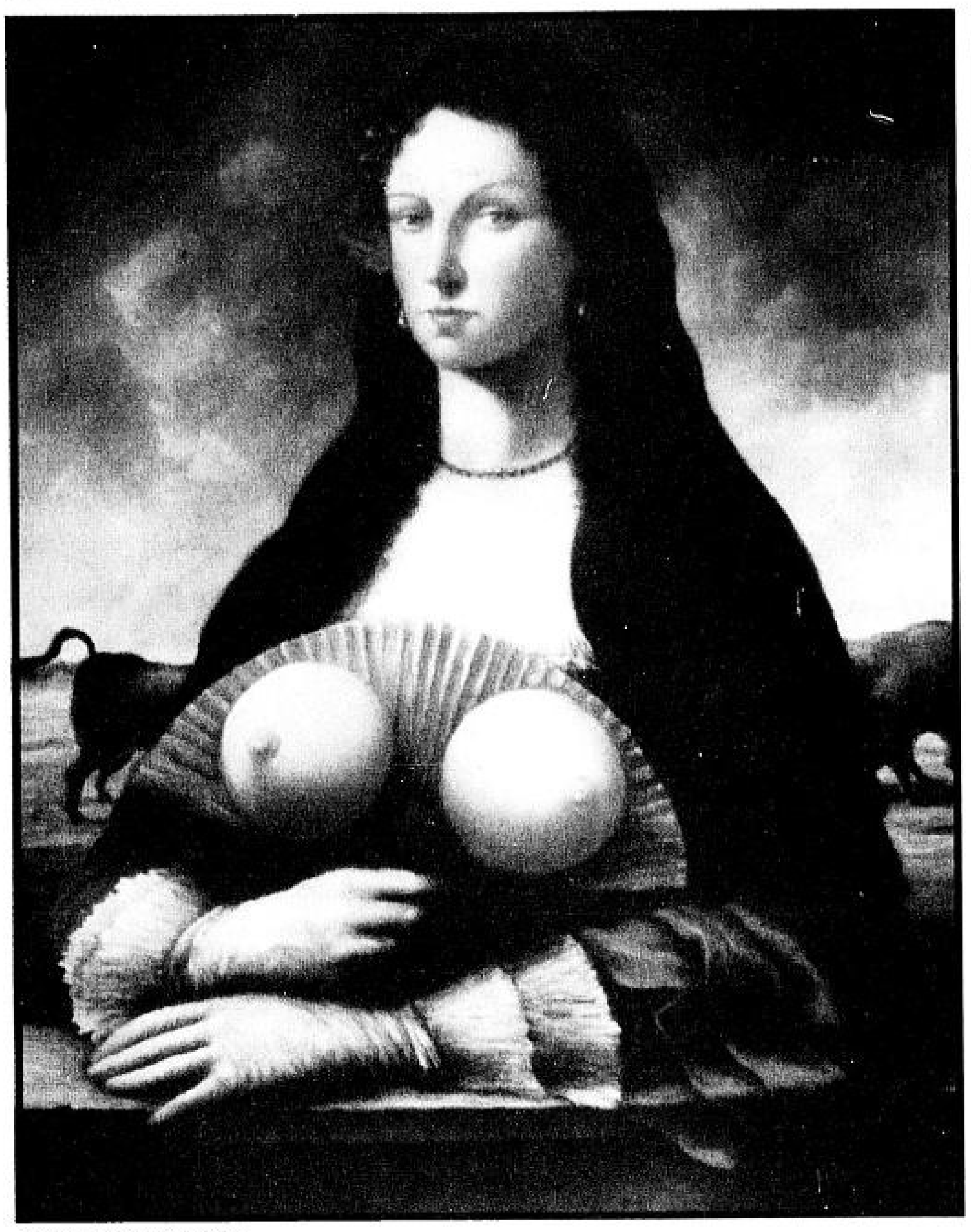
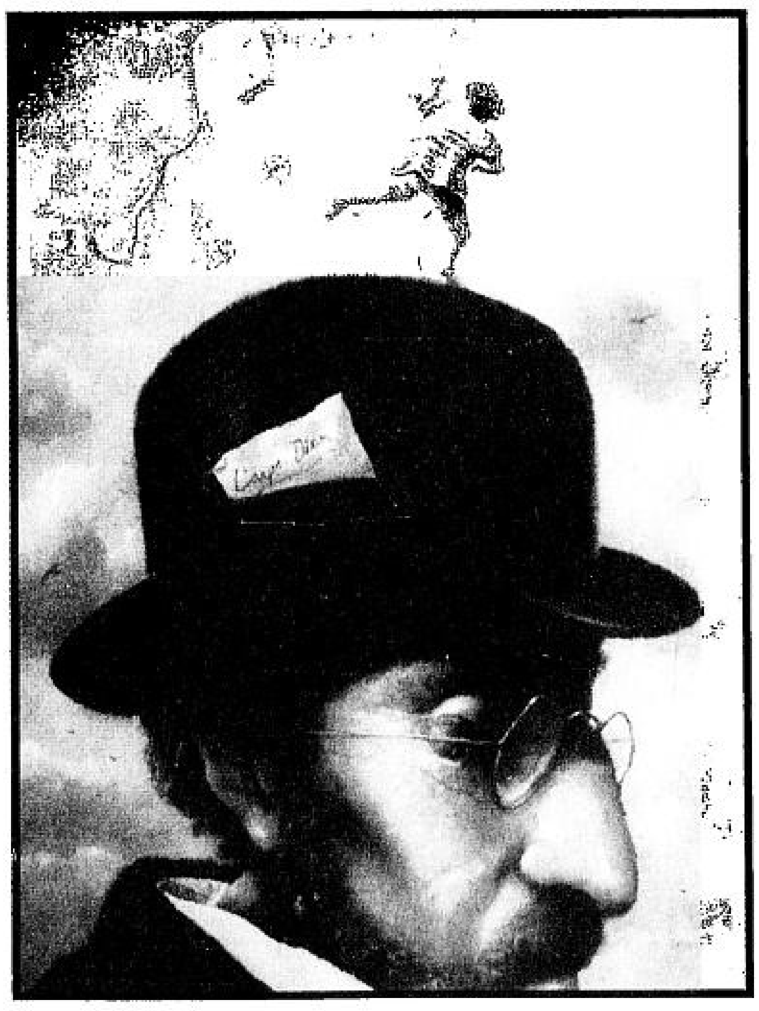


REBELLIOUS Disguise

THE ARTIST BRUIHN at work

INSPIRATION SANDWICH

Sensibly surreal BRUIHN



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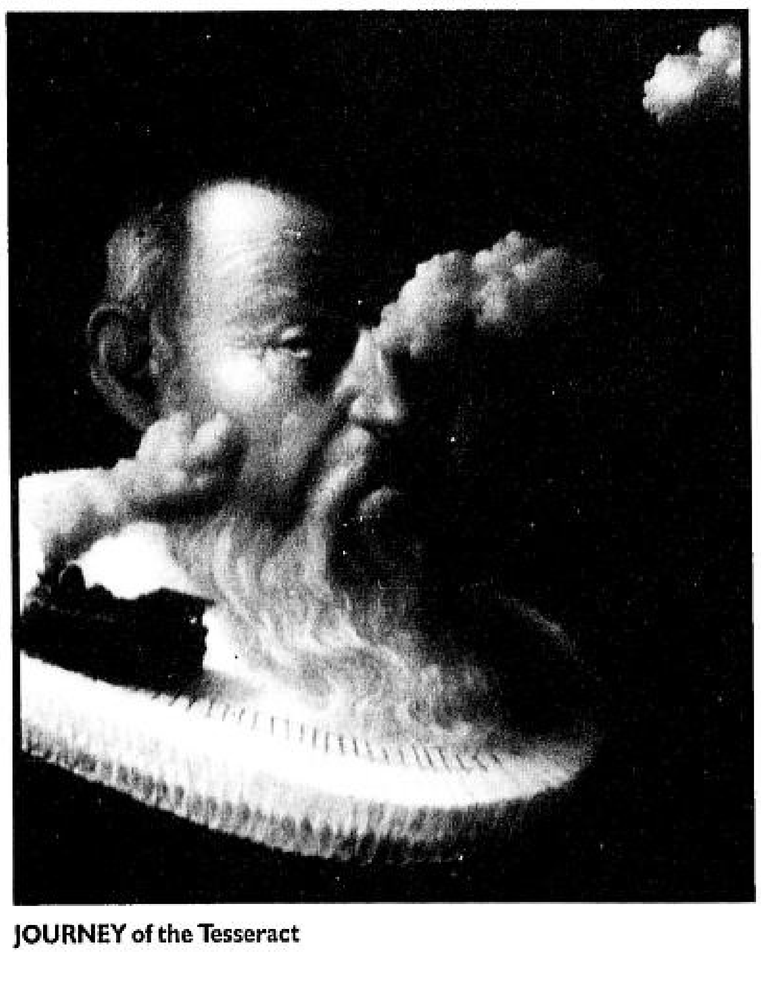
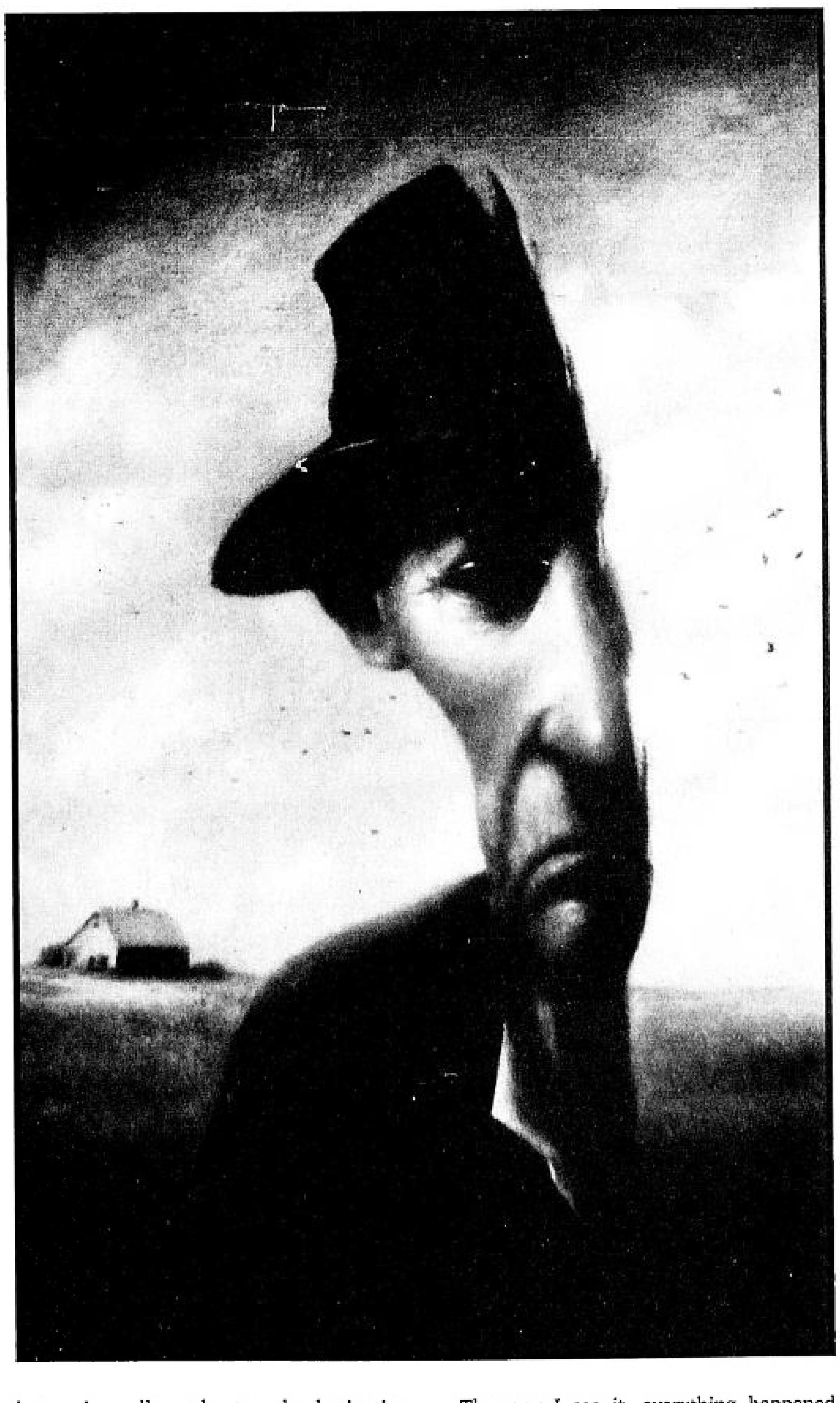


JOURNEY of the Tesseract

SOLO La Muerte



Interview by Ovvian Castrillo

IT IS said that the truly wise lay no claims to knowing anything. Constantly asking questions through his art, the surrealist painter Bruihn incites wonder and provokes the imagination … allowing others to share his very personal mental and artistic experience.

What comes first, the theme/subject or the poetic logic/philosophical question?

It depends on the piece. Sometimes it's more of the poetry that comes first, and you don't understand it logically … there is no logical meaning. It's only when you render it and all of a sudden your mind looks for a connection. Once in a while, I do get something that is purely conceptual, purely logical. But it's harder to paint that because it's the poetry that keeps you going. The whole package is, you see the image, you see the background, you see what it's gonna look like and it'll move you.

Which took more time to develop, your skill as a painter, your skill in developing a provocative element, or your philosophy? And which one is more consuming?

I don't know if you can call it the philosophical part, but I think it would be the living part. I have to say that probably 40 percent would be the actual painting … that is already a lot of time.

How did you evolve as an artist?

I am from Antipolo. There is this hill … I used to go up there a lot. From that vantage point, one tends to think. You just watch clouds day after day, and then you come upon certain ideas, philosophies that later on you find in a book … and you discover that there are names to these, and maybe a whole science, and whole religions based on it. The wonder of it kept me going.

How do you see yourself evolving still?

I really have no idea. It's not a conscious thing … because nothing prepares me for life. I have certain ideas about craftsmanship, and that's the only thing I can have control over. Either it works or it doesn't; either it speaks to me or it doesn't. There is a part of me that knows I'am actually giving the piece 100 percent attention. But what I paint … sometimes I am painting something and I don't even know what it means until two weeks after. It's only then that you see how it's connected to your life.

Surrealism … the show is about your life. As a person, is there anything surreal about you?

Isn't everybody's life surreal?

You say that, painting for this show, you realized that you did not know much … that there is still a long way to go. What else do you want to know?

It's not so much the end-all answer that you're after; it's the mere fact that you keep questioning, because you know that you're in motion. You know you're headed somewhere, but you're really not bent on the destination. And … the more I have been painting, the more that I have been living, the more I realize that you don't know much. Painting is a humbling experience.

They say that your show is long-awaited. What took you so long?

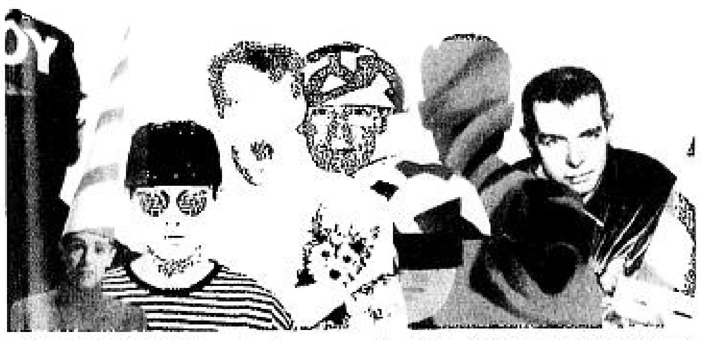
The way I see it, everything happened when it should have.

(PURLUCERE The Unfolding at Firma, the show of paintings by the artist BRUIHN, runs until Dec. 11, 2003 at Firma, 3/F Greenbelt 3 Ayala Center Makati City. Tels. 757-4009.)

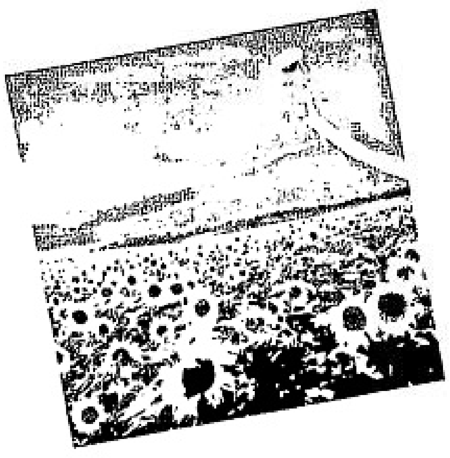
SUPER! SELECTIONS

Brain food

Listen



THE PET SHOP Boys just came out with a killer compilation of their best songs—45 tracks all in all. There are CD, DVD and triple vinyl versions.



APPARENTLY, December is also the season for "best of" albums. Warner Philippines recently released three CDs featuring the hits of three bands that have changed lives of music lovers—R.E.M., Red Hot Chili Peppers and Stone Temple Pilots.

THE BEST OF R.E.M IN TIME 1988-2003

RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS
GREATEST HITS
PARENTAL ADVISORY
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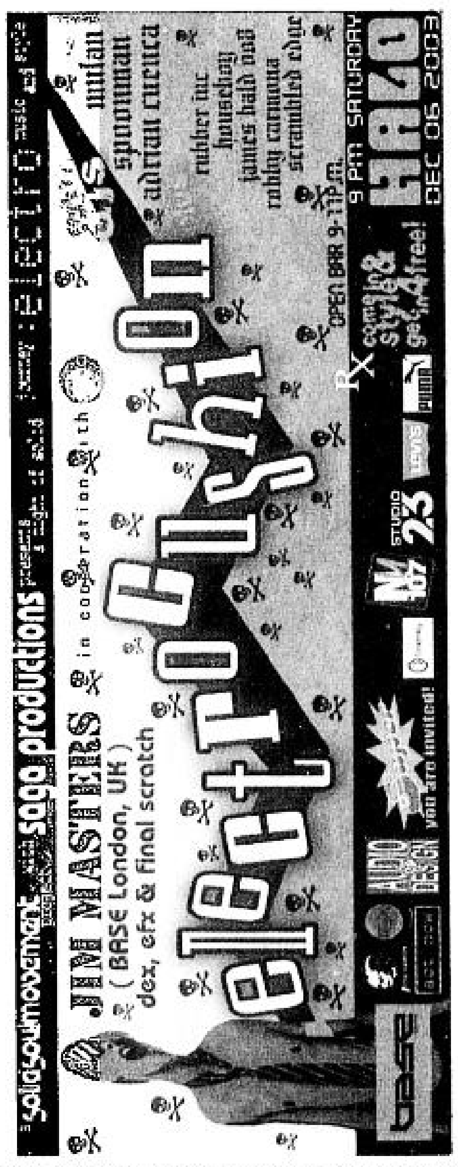
HIT the record stores, load up on chips and drinks and ask your friends to come over so you can all take the plunge back into your forgotten days together.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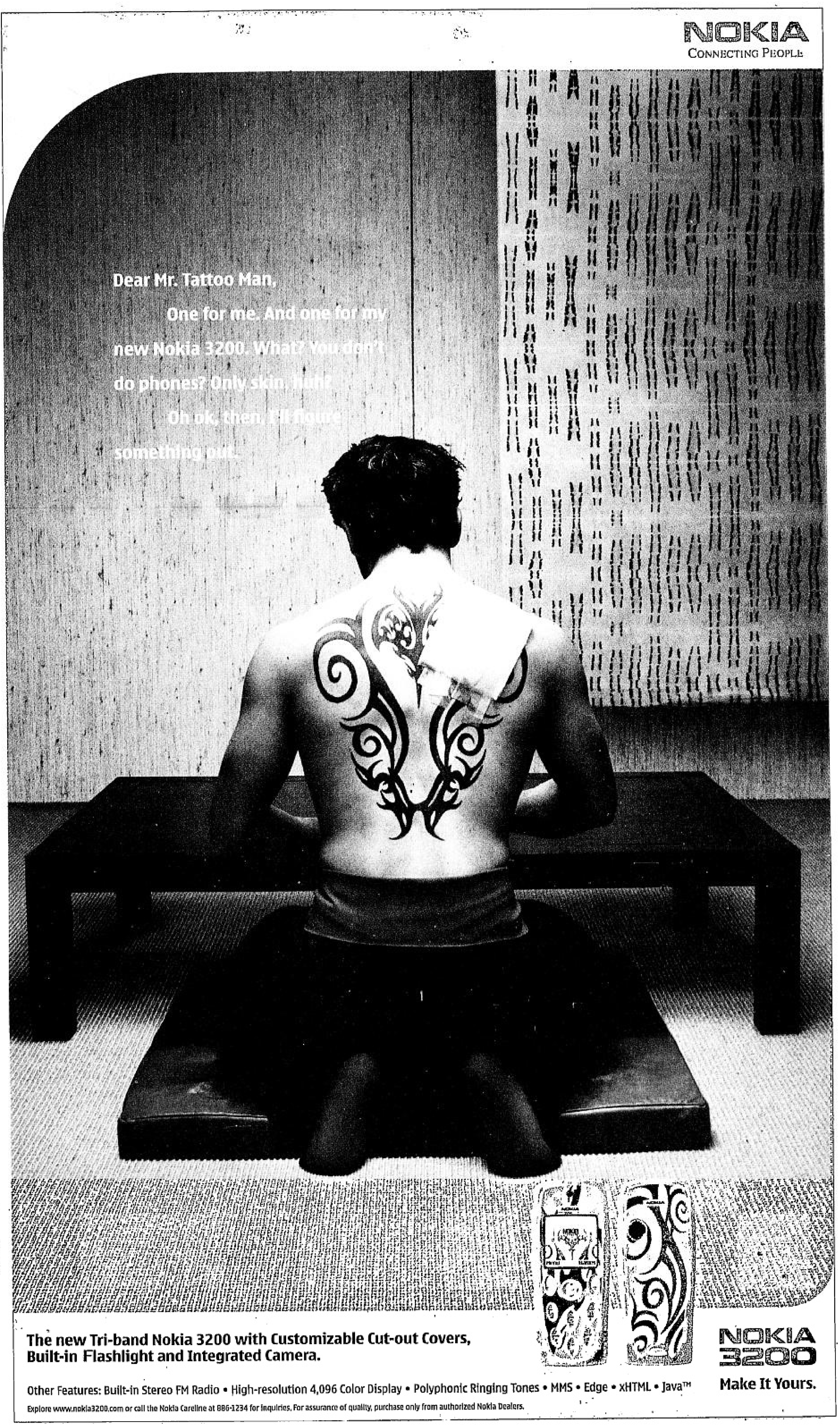
Watch

FORGET Kevin McAllister. Macaulay Culkin's portrayal of Michael Alig, the gay Club Kid party organizer from '80s New York who is now behind bars for the murder of his friend/roommate/drug dealer Angel Melendez, might just be the key to making us forget the screaming kid who fought off robbers with the use of micro-machines.

Party Monster, which was based on James St. James' book called Disco Bloodbath, is Culkin's first movie after his bout with agoraphobia.

It's strange, some reviews have said.

But hey, strange can be good.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November 28 to December 17, 2003 only.

See leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3547, Series of 2003.

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SUN CELLULAR
Everything Important is Under the Sun

DIANA ZUBIRI tastes the Prince of Jaipur

TINA TASTES

by Tina Pamintuan

JAIPUR in India is known as "Pink City" because of the rose-colored walls of the ancient palaces in the region. The Prince of Jaipur restaurant made certain we experience Jaipur. The flashy majestic bright pink exterior is hard to miss. And the splash of fuschia continues inside. The ambiance casts a spell on you, making you feel like you were entering a different world and time.

The actress

Diana Zubiri is no stranger to captivating experiences and satisfying the senses. I still can't decide if I think her to be a tease or an actress, but I definitely had fun being with her. I asked a few questions and had to twist her arm till it came off before she warmed up. We were laughing almost throughout the interview. She didn't eat but she answered my questions:

What's your major talent?

Wala. (laughs) *Maganda lang ako, gusto ko sumayaw ng mas magaling kasi* sexy star *ako pero hindi 'yun iyung* personality *ko, hindi* natural.

So where did you learn, from workshops?

Mga sexuality workshops, *ganun! Ewan ko nahihirapan nga ako pero basta lang lumalabas sya.*

What comes naturally to you?

Gusto ko maging singer, *mahilig ako sa* lovesongs.

Do you enjoy being a girl?

Mahirap maging babae, ayokong mabuntis at palaging sinasabihan na mahina ka.

So you'd rather be a guy?

Ayoko! Masarap ang feeling *na nililigawan, na lahat sila* for you.

Which actress do you idolize?

Julia Roberts

What's more important—your career or your private life?

Private life. *Pero ngayon kailangan ko magtrabaho para sa pamilya ko.*

What is your dream?

To be a teacher, *mahilig ako sa bata.*

What if your kid one day says, "Mom I wanna be just like you?"

Ayokong maranasan nya ang naranasan ko.

But are you happy?

Oo naman.

What do you enjoy most about being a bold star? What do you hate the most?

Gusto ko yung production numbers *sa* "Eat Bulaga" *kasi mahilig ako kumanta. Ayoko yung binabastos ako.*

Do you think some people just like you because of your looks?

Oo, ginagawa akong trophy. But over time, *doon mo lang malalaman.*

Do you think you're pretty?

Wala namang nagsabi na hindi, ikaw pa lang!

What's a perfect date for you?

Sa pool! *Pero di ako marunong lumangoy, tamad ako eh!*

What do you like in guys?

Nakakatawa na makulit, Pinoy.

DIANA/ J2

OPEN UP AND SAY ... AAAH! *Nganga na (Susubuan kita)*

This is the season to samba and sip on that tall, cool glass of piña colada! Melt those wintery chills with these unbelievably sunny holiday bargains from Shopwise — from yummy Noche Buena treats to festive gift suggestions that'll make you go hula all the way! May your holidays sizzle with a dash of tropical spice and may all your Christmas shopping sprees be wise!

Longest Holiday Hours:
[illegible]
No Membership Required.

ALABANG Left Wing | Festival Supermall | Filinvest ▪ MAKATI Corner of Pasong Tamo and Vito Cruz Extension ▪ LIBIS 150 E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue | Bagumbayan | QC

DIANA ZUBIRI tastes the Prince of Jaipur

From page J1

Like who?

(Giggles hysterically and covers her face)

The entire restaurant staff was just dying to get her autograph.

The food

Most of us are familiar with fish, vegetable and chicken kebabs or tikkas. You can find all that here. The chicken kebab here is the softest and most tender I've ever tasted. They've also taken ground meat and minced lamb kebab to another level. You can enjoy it in three new flavors. The tri-color kebab platter is assorted ground meat mixed with spinach (a fabulous combination), red Indian chilli and turmeric. For those who are not too keen on spices, order the tandoori prawn and chicken roller. It is marinated before cooking, so the spices are subtle and subdued, just tingling the tongue a tad without overpowering the prawn and chicken combination. The paneer tastes like grilled french tofu.

It's a must to eat soupy dishes with their assortment of naans, roti and papadum. Have the roomali roti—soft, sweet and salty bread. I don't know anyone who doesn't like roti. If you like vegetables, you must get the dhal makhani which is a famous punjabi black dhal lentil stew. A raita is always a good bet to offset too fiery mouths.

I just recently discovered Indian desserts. The gulab jamun is a green cardamon dumpling. It tastes and looks like a small doughnut soaked in very cold milk and pistachios. The less adventurous can try kulfi falooda, traditional Indian ice cream with vermicelli.

Max, the manager wanted to please Diana as best as he could, making a milder dish, buttered chicken, Jaipur style. Besides *sinigang* which she says is her favorite, I was clueless to what else I could make her sample and swallow. She admits that her taste in food is the same for men: "*Pinoy, maasim* and *maalat-alat*."

I ended up having the buttered chicken as well. Who can resist the chunks of boneless chicken with creamy melted butter and Indian spices? Diana.

INDIAN MENU VOCABULARY

bhindi—okra

biryani—rich basmati rice with spiced meat and vegetables all cooked together

dahl—lentil curry similar to a thick bean soup

garam masala—aromatic blend of ground mixed spices,usually very hot

kofta—meatballs or vegetable dumplings

makhani—cooked with butter

naan—teardrop-shaped flat bread cooked in tandoor oven

pappadum—large thin wafers similar to potato crisps

paneeer—Indian curd cheese

raita—yoghurt mix, usually with cucumber

roti—unleavened bread, flat wholeweat pancake

tandoori—cooked in clay oven with oil

tikka—meat or fish cut into cubes, marinted in spicy yoghurt and baked in tandoor

vindaloo—hottest curry, originally from Goa

What: Prince of Jaipur

Where: Unit E, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila

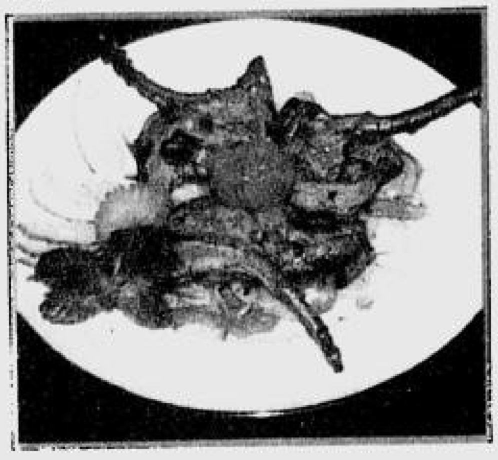
When: Lunch: 11:30 a.m.- 2 p.m. (buffet) and dinner: 6 p.m. - 10 p.m. (ala carte)

How much: P500 per head

Contact: Chicho or Max at 8841692/4

(E-mail the author at Tina_tastes@yahoo.com)

FOR THE HOT TONGUE. Cool off with Indian ice cream

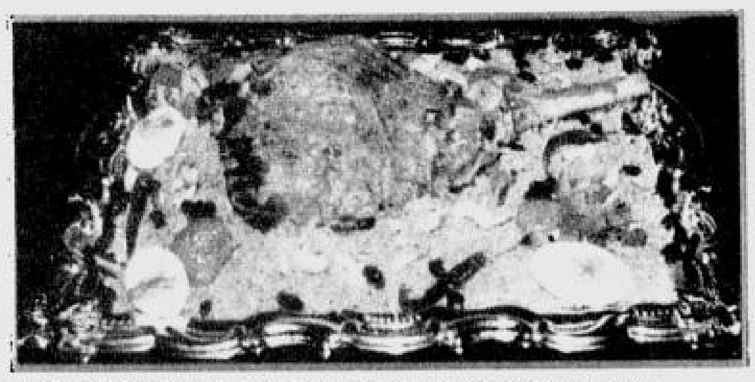


PINK AND JUICY. Classic choice Lamb chops

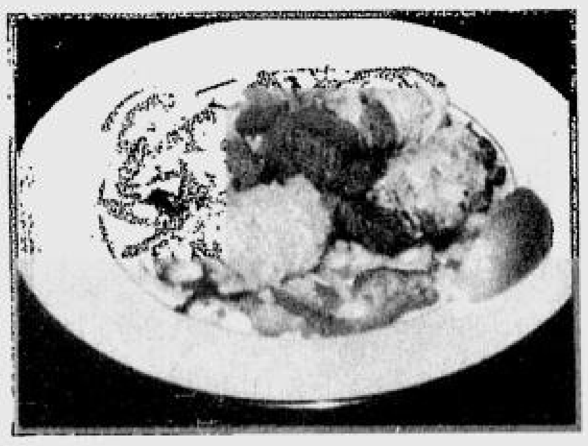
ASSORTED flavored kebabs

ANG laki, hindi kasya. Have it all and try the platter kebab factory

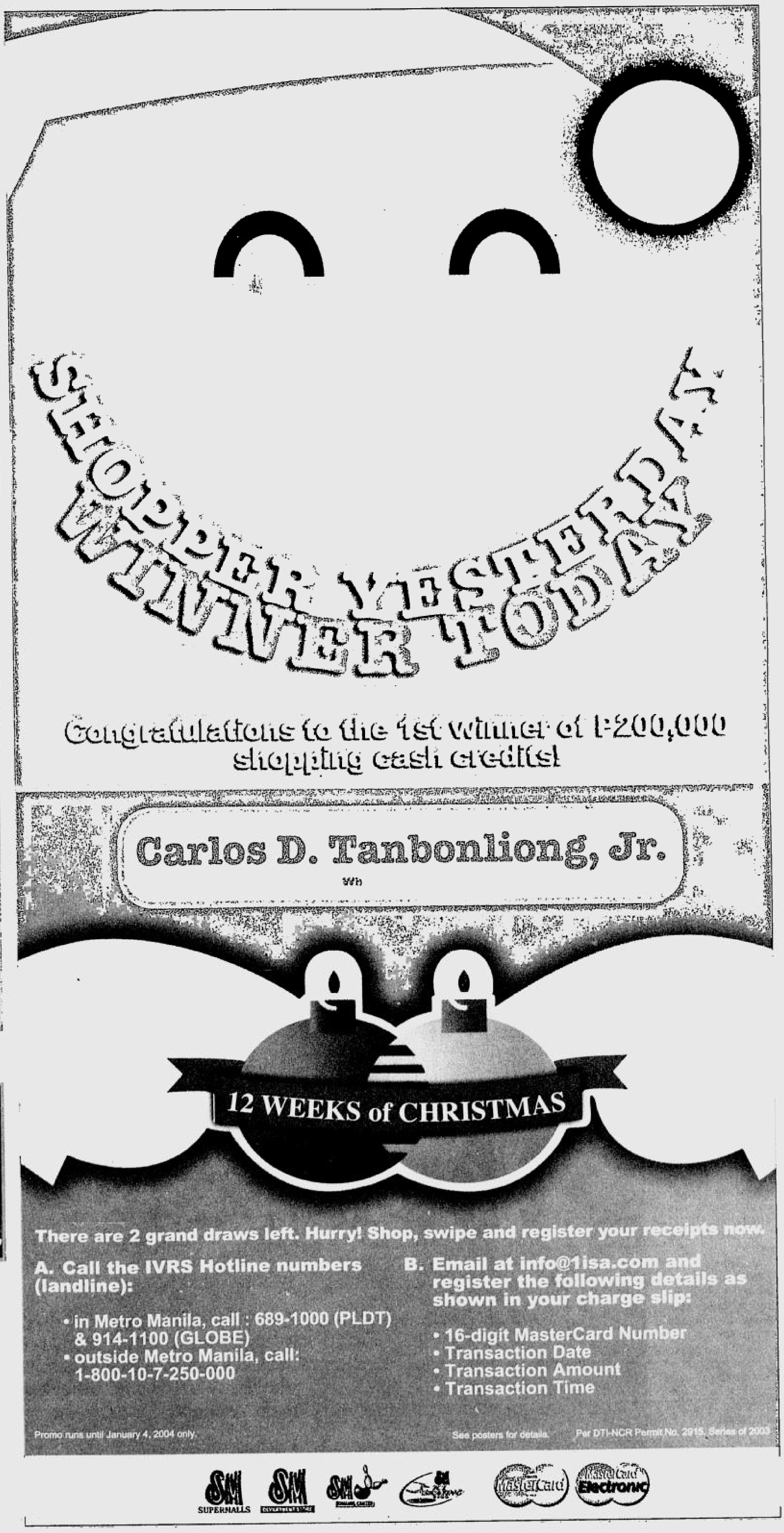
INDIAN FRIED RICE. Chicken Biryani



PAKAO MASUI. A whole slow roasted lamb leg fit for a prince



TOO yummy! Tandoori prawn and chicken roller



SHOPPER YESTERDAY
WINNER TODAY

Congratulations to the 1st winner of P200,000 shopping cash credits!

Carlos D. Tanbonliong, Jr.

12 WEEKS of CHRISTMAS

There are 2 grand draws left. Hurry! Shop, swipe and register your receipts now.

A. Call the IVRS Hotline numbers (landline):

- in Metro Manila, call : 689-1000 (PLDT) & 914-1100 (GLOBE)
- outside Metro Manila, call: 1-800-10-7-250-000

B. Email at info@1isa.com and register the following details as shown in your charge slip:

- 16-digit MasterCard Number
- Transaction Date
- Transaction Amount
- Transaction Time

Promo runs until January 4, 2004 only.

See posters for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2915, Series of 2003

SUPERMALLS

Superfriends!

Hi, I'm Jun Ofrasio.
My alter ego is Superman.
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be "Ako si Superman—wala nang iba."
The person who can make me pee in my pants is Steve Martin.
Christmas is the best time for anything possible under the sun (that means something hot).
E-mail me at peepingtom@hotmail.com

Hi, I'm Gloria Sicam.
My alter ego is Zsa Zsa Trenet
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be "Do you know what happens in a bag of Nips? What goes on before they touch your lips? They make a rainbow."
The person who can make me pee in my pants is my dad—he's hilarious.
Christmas is the best time for making excuses for not sticking to my diet.
E-mail me at youwish@hotmail.com.

Hi, I'm Topper.
My alter ego is Pheona "Superstar" Baranda.
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be "Actually, I was just cooling down."
The person who can make me pee in my pants is Pheona "Superstar" Baranda.
Christmas is the best time for giving gifts to Pheona "Superstar" Baranda.
E-mail me at akosipheona@hotmail.com.

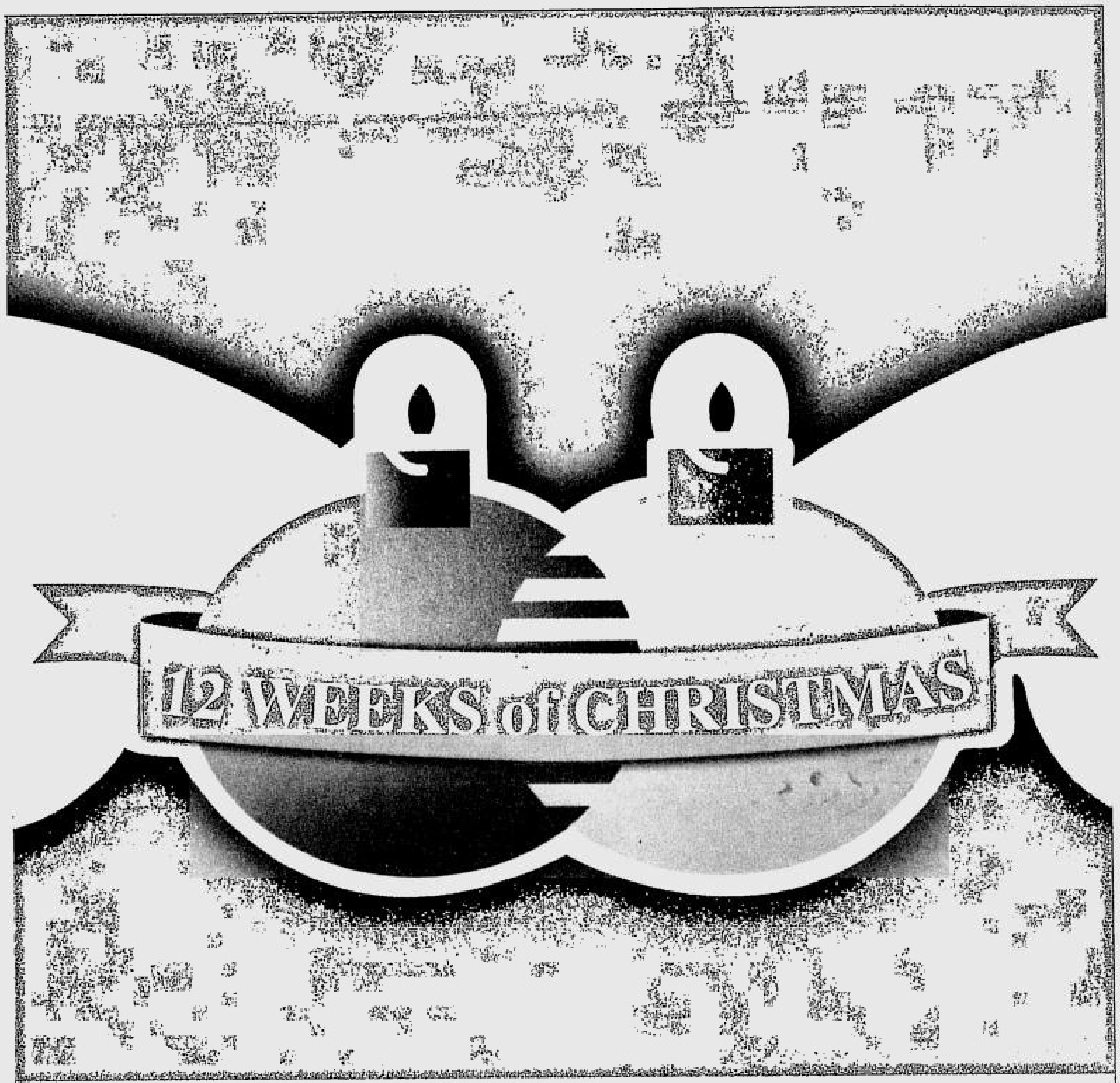
Hi, I'm Anna Liza.
My alter ego is Ruthie Hensall.
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be The Shoop-Shoop Song.
The person who can make me pee in my pants is Joey (Matt Le Blanc) in Friends.
Christmas is the best time for bibingka, ham, chicken relleno and family reunions!
E-mail me at oldwoman@hotmail.com.

Hi, I'm Boyd Tinio.
My alter ego is Flash.
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be "Born to be wild." (Good Year Tires)
The person who can make me pee in my pants is Big Bird (defeathered) dressed.
Christmas is the best time for eating.
E-mail me at boydtinio@yahoo.com.

Hi, I'm Ritchie Nolasco.
My alter ego is Rainbow Brite.
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be Ang Pasalubong Ng Bayan.
The person who can make me pee in my pants is Annie Lennox.
Christmas is the best time for killing cabbies who charge extra because of traffic and don't accept passengers because the destination is not in their route.

Hi, I'm Jeremy Aguado.
My alter ego is Mr. McQueen.
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be Born To Be Wild.
The person who can make me pee in my pants is Grace Jones.
Christmas is the best time for partying.
E-mail me at jameyaguado@hotmail.com.

Hi, I'm Jigs Mayuga.
My alter ego is David Fisher.
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be Some People Just Know How To Fly.
The person who can make me pee in my pants is my boss.
Christmas is the best time for remembering people you love.
E-mail me at jiggy78@hotmail.com.



We wish you 200,000!
We wish you 200,000!

Two more grand draws left.
Next draw is on December 12, 2003.
Hurry! Shop, swipe and register your receipts now.

A. Call the IVRS Hotline numbers (landline):
- In Metro Manila, call 1689-1000 (PLDT) & 914-1000 (GLOBE)
Outside Metro Manila, call 1-800-10-7250-000

B. Email at info@[illegible] and register the following details as shown in your charge slip:
- 16-digit MasterCard Number
- Transaction Date
- Transaction Amount
- Transaction Time

SM SUPERMALLS SM SM MasterCard MasterCard Electronic

Superfriends!

Banyo buddies

By Tim Yap
Photos by Jake Versoza

SUPER! went behind closed bathroom doors to flush out answers from the cast members of Urinetown while in the can.

What we got was a plethora of poses (though not in the buff—sorry guys and gals), and prose much better than your last bathroom read.

Wanna see yourselves in our Super! pages? Drop us a line (not your pants), and jingle all the way to super@inquirer.com.ph.

Go ahead and answer the call of nature.

Hi, I'm Val Trono.
My alter ego is Jessica Rabbit.
The person who can make me pee in my pants is David Spade.
Christmas is the best time for being with friends and family.
E-mail me at vtrono@yahoo.com

Hi, I'm Juliene Mendoza.
My alter ego is Mini-Me, Hot Blades Harry, Old Man Strong.
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be Lalaking Disente-3 Flowers, Good Morning Yesterday-Kodak.
The person who can make me pee in my pants is Barney on a sex trip!
Christmas is the best time for annoying people with affection, killing people with love, pissing people with kindness.
E-mail me at juliandrews@hotmail.com.

Hi, I'm Chari Arespacochaga.
My alter ego is Cher.
If my life were an ad, the jingle would be I love milk and I love Klim so rich and so creamy whoa whoa whoa!!! I love Klim!
The person who can make me pee in my pants is the one who wakes me mornings!
Christmas is the best time for friends and family and sweaters. E-mail me at cheacherchowee@macmail.com

GLOBE TELECOM Business Center Exclusives

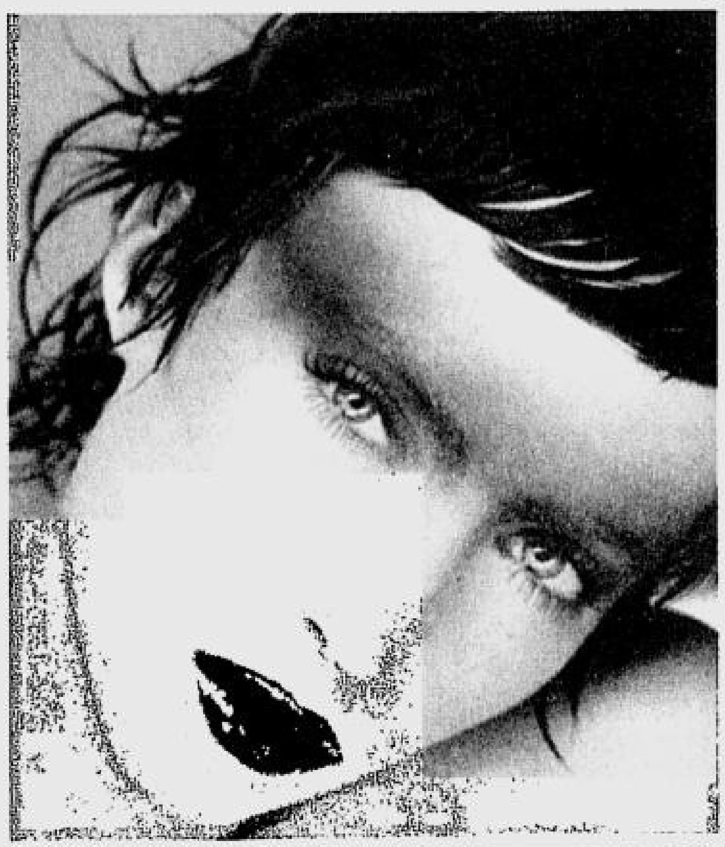
christmas wishlist
Shopping Spree
Nokia 3650 w/ digital pen
Peninsula Indulgence Package
Nokia 6600 w/ wireless headset
Date with Pia

Get a chance to make 3 of your Christmas wishes come true!

- Purchase a new Nokia G Plan or a new Nokia Prepaid Phonekit from December 6, 2003 to January 4, 2004 at any Globe Telecom Business Center and you qualify for 1 raffle entry.
- Choose any 3 of these exciting treats to create your personalized Christmas wishlist:
  - An all-expense paid lunch/dinner date with Pia Guanio
  - Peninsula Indulgence Ladies Package for 2 (overnight stay at The Peninsula Manila with complimentary breakfast, afternoon tea & cocktails, pampering at Institute Clarins/Emphasis Salon, plus drive up to Rustan's with a Mercedes-Benz limousine for a personalized shopping tour)
  - 2 sets of easy-to-recall Golden Prepaid Numbers
  - Shopping spree at Marks & Spencer worth P25,000
  - Nokia 7250i phone unit + music stand
  - Nokia 3650 phone unit + digital pen
  - Nokia 6600 phone unit + wireless clip-on headset
- To join, subscribers can text XMAS to 2363 to receive keywords of the service plus the how-to-join instructional message (P2.00/text for postpaid and P2.50/text for prepaid).
- Only 3 lucky subscribers will be granted their hearts desire so text now and be merry! The raffle draw will be held on January 13, 2004.

NOKIA CONNECTING PEOPLE Globe HANDYPHONE

See posters for details. Per DTI-NOR Permit No.5132, Series of 2003.



L'ORÉAL Of Poets & Peasants

By Gino de la Paz and Tals Diaz

TO BE both a POET and a PEASANT, this simple yet thought provoking mantra sums up an ideal that is exclusive to L'OREAL. "Here at L'oreal," says Thierry Prevot, L'Oreal's Director-General, Asia-Japan, "we have a saying that we want people who are both "poets and peasants. The peasant works everyday, he looks at the sun, at the clouds, to make things happen. The poet is a dreamer, a visionary. If you are both, then you can understand what L'Oreal is about.' This underlying conviction is manifested fully in L'Oreal's corporate culture where creativity merges seamlessly with an acute business sense.

A decade ago, a famous taste-shaping blonde summed up her own take on attractiveness by saying "Beauty is where you find it." More than cribbing another cliché, that pop star was right on the money. The concept of beauty, especially in these accelerated times, is a Rorschach test

POETS' K2

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University ties Page 4

SPOTLIGHT ON WOMEN:

The L'Oréal-UNESCO partnership

"L'OREAL'S commitment alongside UNESCO in the FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE partnership is a concrete expression of our firm intention to promote women in scientific research and to participate in the creation of new vocations throughout the world." (Lindsay Owen-Jones, chairman and CEO, L'OREAL)

"The commitment of a group such as L'OREAL alongside an organization like UNESCO is a perfect example of the sort of partnership which we can engage in with the private sector."

(Koichiro Matsuura, Director- General of UNESCO)

Among the top scientific prizes, the For Women in Science (FWIS) program is uniquely positioned as it is the only one to be dedicated to women scientists and rewarding researchers under extremely varying conditions, by allocating awards/fellowships for each continent of the world.

The program has two types of awards:

The L'OREAL - UNESCO AWARD is now at par with the greatest scientific honors in the world as it recognizes 5 remarkable women researchers annually from (AFRICA, ASIA-PACIFIC, EUROPE, LATIN AMERICA and NORTH AMERICA) with a grant of ($100,000). This award highlights their achievements and holds them up as role models for an entire generation of young women. With 2003 awards, 26 scientists from 23 countries have been recognized.

The UNESCO - L'OREAL FELLOWSHIP encourages young women scientists to pursue their research in the laboratory of their choice. In order to give more breadth to the program and increase impact on the world of science, the number of fellowships, and their value, was increased in 2003. Now 15 women are awarded ($20,000) fellowships (three for each of the 5 regions of the world: AFRICA, ARAB STATES, ASIA/PACIFIC, EUROPE/NORTH AMERICA and LATIN AMERICA). Since its inception it has distinguished a total of 45 young scientists from more than 35 countries.

Background

On 29 September 1999, L'ORÉAL and UNESCO committed themselves "through mutual, concerted cooperation, to carry out joint projects which would benefit the situation of women on an international scale in general and in their scientific work in particular" (extract from the partnership agreement signed by L'OREAL and UNESCO).

On 17 October 2002, this partnership was strengthened. The Executive Council of UNESCO approved the decision to qualify the program as the L'OREAL-UNESCO Award (no longer simply the L'OREAL AWARD with the support of UNESCO). This decision illustrates the determination of UNESCO to further involve itself in this partnership, which has been regarded as a model by many of its member states.

The working relationship between UNESCO and L'OREAL is a first which is rich in resonance: it is an affirmation by the business world of its responsibility to forge scientific progress, and a recognition by the world of government of the positive contribution which business makes to the big issues of tomorrow's world.

Further Information

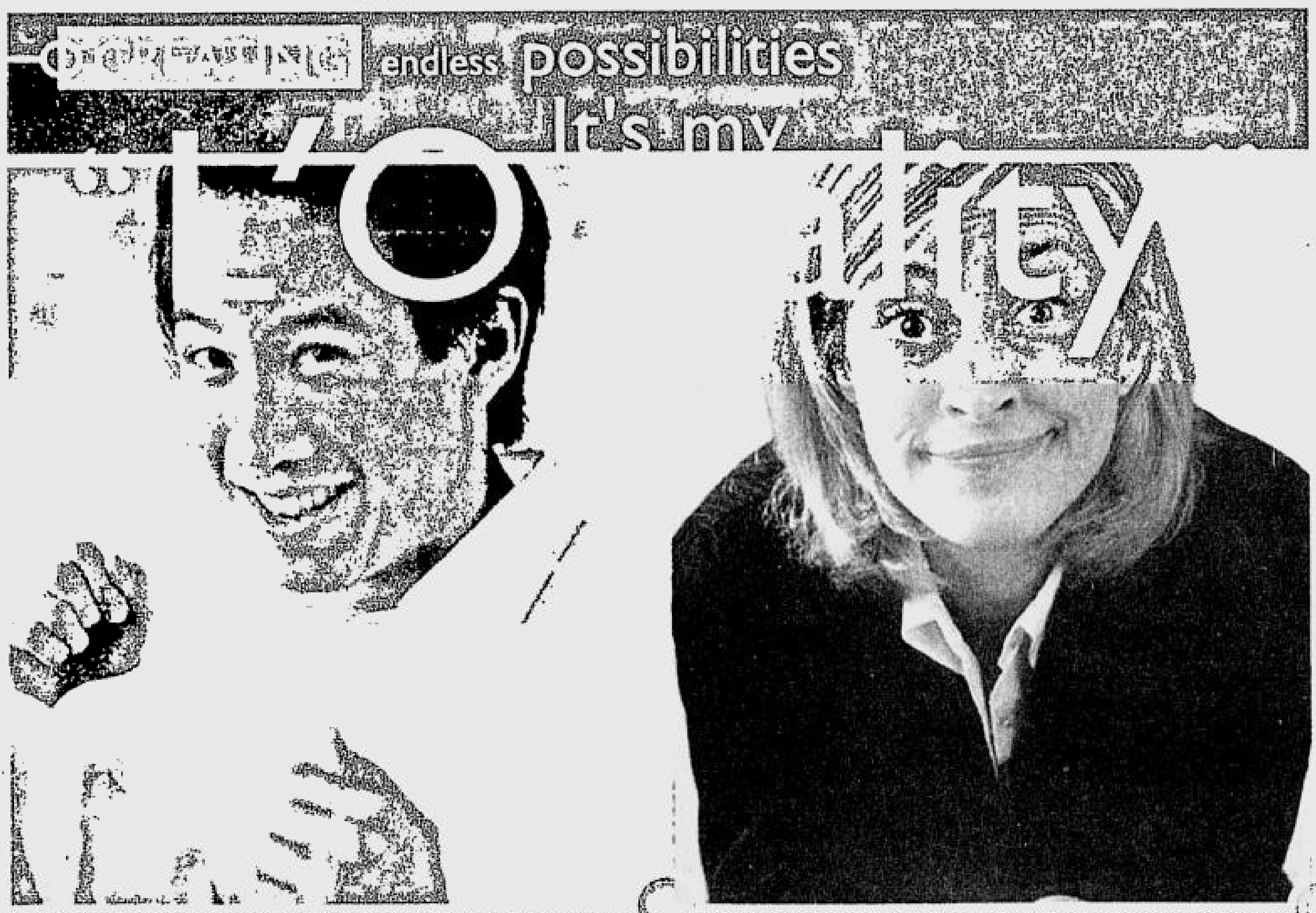
Please contact the L'OREAL-UNESCO AWARDS 2004 Executive Secretariat:

L'OREAL: Contact L'OREAL, Centre Eugene Schueller, 41, rue Martre, 92117 CLICHY CEDEX, FRANCE. Attention: ELIZABETH GAVARD, tel: 33 1 47 56 86 69, fax: 33 1 47 56 42 59, or email egavard@dgc.loreal.com

UNESCO: 1, rue Miollis, 75015 PARIS, FRANCE. Attention: RENEE CLAIR, tel: 33 1 45 68 36 10, fax: 33 1 45 68 58 18. Or email r.clair@unesco.org

Owen-Jones awarding Dr. Li, 2003 For Women in Science Awards, Paris

Lindsay Owen-Jones, Chairman and CEO, L'OREAL



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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Of poets &peasants

THIERRY Prev

From page K1

of sorts. With its promise of chameleon-like transformations, beauty products have become as fundamental as bottled water. Most of the time, however, these godsends are merely regarded as Band-Aids that extend our ability to alter our outward features and nothing more.

L'Oréal is a company that dares to redefine the business of beauty by going beyond skin-deep perceptions and celebrating the diversity of physical appearances. Their approach is undeniably holistic. The global cosmetics leader works from the inside out.

Extremely inspiring as he is stylish, Mr. Thierry Prevot is tasked with extending L'Oréal's unique vision in the Asian region. Resembling a French Sensei in an impeccable silk jacket, Mr. Prevot is mindful that we are in a new era of options. Most people may try on identities like they try on clothes, but his 18 years with the company have taught him that integrity is the essence of everything, most especially at L'Oréal. He shares that L'Oréal is a brand that represents the unique intersection of creativity and commerce, where you can both dream and work.

Prevot himself embodies panache upon first encounter; exuding charisma and demanding undivided attention as he reflects on L'Oreal's celebration of the diversity of beauty. One is enlightened on the deeper attributes of the global cosmetics enterprise as not simply a venture solely concerned with the flagrant accumulation of profit. It runs far deeper than that, for behind L'Oreal lies a solid backbone of core values that remain the foundation of continued growth and unparalleled success.

Integrity has always been the essence of the L'Oreal group," expresses Prevot. "The values of this company reflect my own values. When you do not agree with the values of your company, you will be at a discomfort. After working in this company for the past 18 years, I fully believe and share in these same values."

Prevot cites certain key values that he believes are the substance of the dynamic L'Oreal group. Honesty, factual strength and once again, the emphasis that money is not everything---quite an unusual principle to live by in the global competitive sphere. Prevot stands firm in his conviction that product quality supersedes profit. "We are not ready to sacrifice people or the quality of the brands for profit. We won't accept profit if we think it is bad for the brand, bad for the people, or most importantly, bad for ethics. A lot of companies are only profit-oriented, we are not like that, and yet we are extremely profitable!" An astounding performance in the past years only proves his beaming assertion, as the L'Oreal group is the only cosmetic company in the world who boasts of showing double-digit growth for their 18th consecutive year. "This is spectacular," Prevot notes, "We are a very unique company in the world with a very unique model of growth."

Prevot attributes the loyalty of people and likewise, the top management's loyalty to their people as the absolute strength of the L'Oreal group. "We believe in the need to build on people for them to honor us with their utmost loyalty." As such, people continue to be the strength behind L'Oreal's outstanding success.

Prevot believe in the importance of employing people exhibiting creativity and sensitivity, and yet grounded in a sense of autonomy and entrepreneurship. "We don't want the profile of a robot!" he adds. "We need to recruit more people who are creative than any other company. We need people who have sensitivity, are open-minded, creative and artistic people, grounded with a good business sense."

Prevot himself is a virtual embodiment of his corporate philosophy. As an alumnus of a prestigious business school in Paris, he admits that he always made time to pursue his other passions in relation to aesthetic, creative endeavors, from oil painting, composing his own music, writing poetry and attending art school. "I love modern and abstract art. For me, art is a way of life. Everything serves as an inspiration to me, and my mind is always open to everything". Yet, he humbly claims, "I am not an artist, but for me, this just proves that I am not totally 'closed' ---my eyes are open to the cultures of the world and it always helps me in how I express my feelings. How to understand the diversity of beauty and the sense of aesthetism. I believe everybody has to find his own balance in that."

Traveling is yet another endeavor that Thierry Prevot readily admits to being what he terms as his breathing space. "I always feel I become 'stronger' when I go back to my headquarters, after my travels. It gives me flexibility; traveling allows me to "breathe" L'Oreal people more." His diversity and open-mindedness is likewise shown in his choice of music. In his last peripatetic sojourn, he shares that he always chooses ten CDs at random, from all over the world. The resulting melange was Guiseppe Verdi, Chinese, Arab and Egyptian music and Leo Ferre (an international French poet). "I have the world with me. I can go from one world to another just by listening to music."

That doctrine of creativity and commerce governs Prevot's favorable observation of the positive attribute of Asian managers as compared to European managers. That is, possessing a keen sense of detail, which ultimately translates to the pursuit of perfection. Quality is achieved because of the attribute of being self-demanding, ultimately leading to endeavours well done. "Because of this sense of detail, they have a true sense of the brands, they have a good sense of branding and excellent PR skills."

Pausing to reflect on his outward revelations, Prevot offers as a parting shot: "Quality requires honesty and self-control. Every job means an opportunity to learn new things, and work is always a continuous discovery of who I am. Work teaches you to be self-demanding; it is a means of self-improvement. A passion for products entails energy, or the power to be. Energy---this is one of the most fantastic qualities of people. It is the source of all dynamism in people."

There lies yet another revelation of L'Oreal's continued understanding of the ever-changing conception of beauty: a genuine belief that beyond a ravishing face lies the continued pursuit of seeking true inspiration in an exquisite, dynamic world.

Nurture Master

PAUL-Henri Duillet

THE STEADY growth of L'Oréal in the Philippines is a product of teamwork and zest for challenge among its talented pool of personnel. Those who find themselves in this culturally diverse company, are in it for a real life adventure while learning the ropes of making it happen in the business of beauty.

So if you're plans include learning the business of global branding, look no further than L'Oreal, a company whose global performance has been both stellar and steady through the years. Last year alone, L'Oreal Group earned 14Billion euros in sales and continues its double digit growth in profit over the last 18 years. Represented by barely half of its brands in the Philippines; LOREAL PROFESSIONNEL, KERASTASE PARIS, GARNIER, LOREAL PARIS, MAYBELLINE NEW YORK, LANCOME, GIORGIO ARMANI and RALPH LAUREN (fragrances), CACHAREL, SHU UEMURA with its outstanding track record it is clear that the world's largest cosmetic company has more up its sleeve for the Philippines.

GETTING INTO L'OREAL

In an industry, where consumer feedback counts a lot, L'Oréal is quite selective-and cautious-with the people they take into their wings. Hence a 'strong understanding of the market' ranks one of the most important things to consider when selecting its people, according to L'Oréal Philippines country manager Paul-Henri Duillet.

Given this, once management sees potential in the person, they make it a point to extract and nurture their personnel's talents further and are more than willing to take a risk on that individual. Risk would mean giving the person an opportunity to expand his or her potentials - such as moving a person into a totally different field from what the person initially applied for.

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DAY ONE

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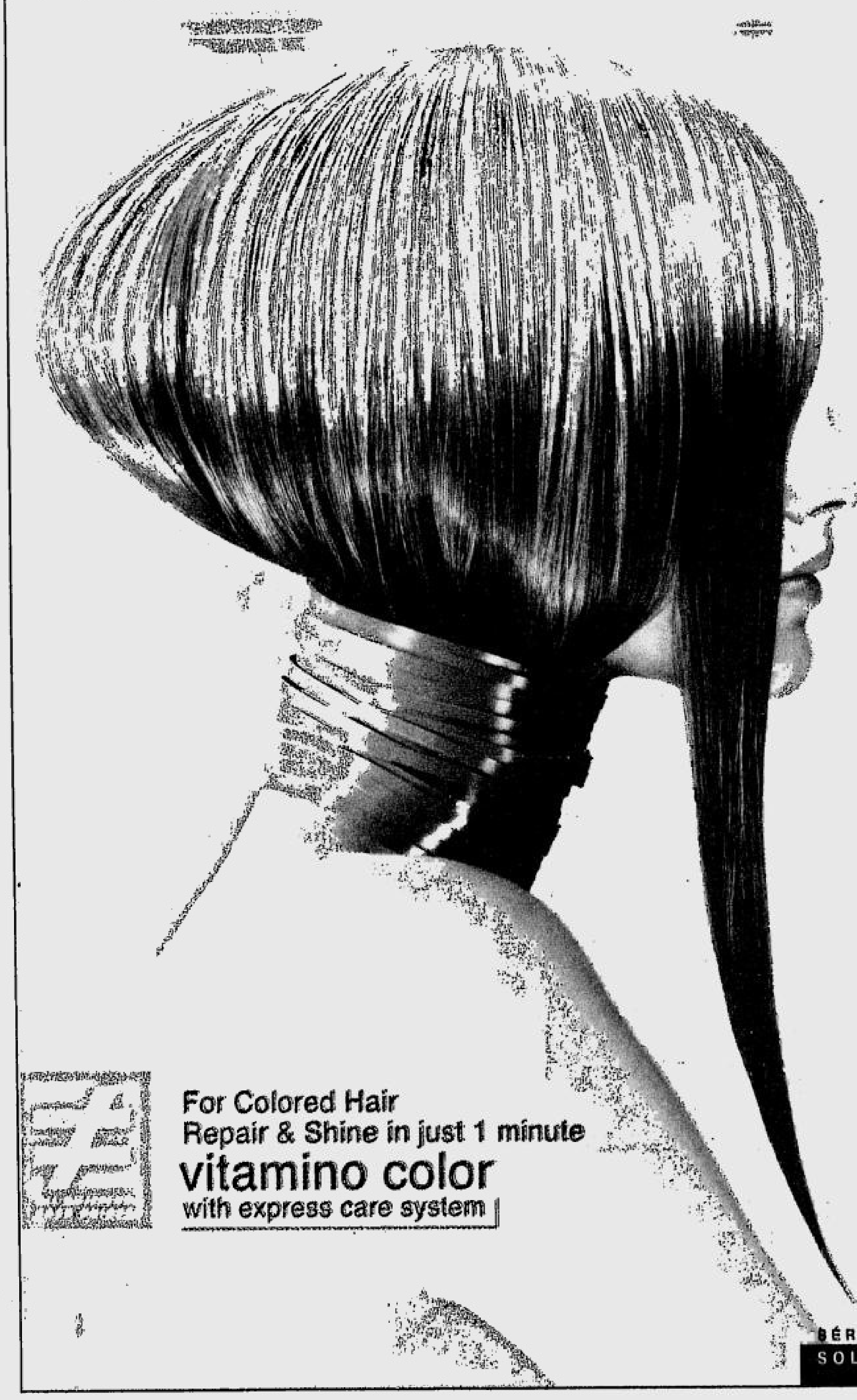

L'ORÉAL PARIS
PROFESSIONNEL

AT YOUR HAIRDRESSER'S
A PROFESSIONAL TIP:

" TREAT YOUR COLORED HAIR TO AN APPETISING, EXTRA-MELTING, ULTRA CONDITIONING MASQUE."

Discover the first 1-minute gel masque which repairs and polishes your colored hair, without any weighing down effect. Its revolutionary melting texture, becomes fluid on application for a quick and even diffusion of the beneficial active ingredients. An ultra-targeted action which leaves the hair light. Colored hair gains new brightness and a silky shine.

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Express Care System
1 Immediate repair
Patented ceramide + Activated protein
2 Intense shine
Candelilla wax

For Colored Hair
Repair & Shine in just 1 minute
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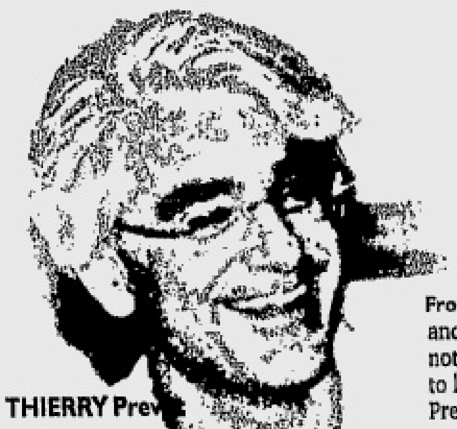
Of poets



THIERRY Prev

From page K1

of sorts. With its promise of chameleon-like transformations, beauty products have become as fundamental as bottled water. Most of the time, however, these godsends are merely regarded as Band-Aids that extend our ability to alter our outward features and nothing more.

L'Oréal is a company that dares to redefine the business of beauty by going beyond skin-deep perceptions and celebrating the diversity of physical appearances. Their approach is undeniably holistic. The global cosmetics leader works from the inside out.

Extremely inspiring as he is stylish, Mr. Thierry Prevot is tasked with extending L'Oréal's unique vision in the Asian region. Resembling a French Sensei in an impeccable silk jacket, Mr. Prevot is mindful that we are in a new era of options. Most people may try on identities like they try on clothes, but his 18 years with the company have taught him that integrity is the essence of everything, most especially at L'Oréal. He shares that L'Oréal is a brand that represents the unique intersection of creativity and commerce, where you can both dream and work.

Prevot himself embodies panache upon first encounter; exuding charisma and demanding undivided attention as he reflects on L'Oreal's celebration of the diversity of beauty. One is enlightened on the deeper attributes of the global cosmetics enterprise as not simply a venture solely concerned with the flagrant accumulation of profit. It runs far deeper than that, for behind L'Oreal lies a solid backbone of core values that remain the foundation of continued growth and unparalleled success.

Integrity has always been the essence of the L'Oreal group," expresses Prevot. "The values of this company reflect my own values. When you do not agree with the values of your company, you will be at a discomfort. After working in this company for the past 18 years, I fully believe and share in these same values."

Prevot cites certain key values that he believes are the substance of the dynamic L'Oreal group. Honesty, factual strength and once again, the emphasis that money is not everything---quite an unusual principle to live by in the global competitive sphere. Prevot stands firm in his conviction that product quality supersedes profit. "We are not ready to sacrifice people or the quality of the brands for profit. We won't accept profit if we think it is bad for the brand, bad for the people, or most importantly, bad for ethics. A lot of companies are only profit-oriented, we are not like that, and yet we are extremely profitable!" An astounding performance in the past years only proves his beaming assertion, as the L'Oreal group is the only cosmetic company in the world who boasts of showing double-digit growth for their 18th consecutive year. "This is spectacular," Prevot notes, "We are a very unique company in the world with a very unique model of growth."

Prevot attributes the loyalty of people and likewise, the top management's loyalty to their people as the absolute strength of the L'Oreal group. "We believe in the need to build on people for them to honor us with their utmost loyalty." As such, people continue to be the strength behind L'Oreal's outstanding success.

Prevot believe in the importance of employing people exhibiting creativity and sensitivity, and yet grounded in a sense of autonomy and entrepreneurship. "We don't want the profile of a robot!" he adds. "We need to recruit more people who are creative than any other company. We need people who have sensitivity, are open-minded, creative and artistic people, grounded with a good business sense."

Prevot himself is a virtual embodiment of his corporate philosophy. As an alumnus of a prestigious business school in Paris, he admits that he always made time to pursue his other passions in relation to aesthetic, creative endeavors, from oil painting, composing his own music, writing poetry and attending art school. "I love modern and abstract art. For me, art is a way of life. Everything serves as an inspiration to me, and my mind is always open to everything". Yet, he humbly claims, "I am not an artist, but for me, this just proves that I am not totally 'closed' ---my eyes are open to the cultures of the world and it always helps me in how I express my feelings. How to understand the diversity of beauty and the sense of aesthetism. I believe everybody has to find his own balance in that."

Traveling is yet another endeavor that Thierry Prevot readily admits to being what he terms as his breathing space. "I always feel I become 'stronger' when I go back to my headquarters, after my travels. It gives me flexibility; traveling allows me to "breathe" L'Oreal people more." His diversity and open-mindedness is likewise shown in his choice of music. In his last peripatetic sojourn, he shares that he always chooses ten CDs at random, from all over the world. The resulting melange was Guiseppe Verdi, Chinese, Arab and Egyptian music and Leo Ferre (an international French poet). "I have the world with me. I can go from one world to another just by listening to music."

That doctrine of creativity and commerce governs Prevot's favorable observation of the positive attribute of Asian managers as compared to European managers. That is, possessing a keen sense of detail, which ultimately translates to the pursuit of perfection. Quality is achieved because of the attribute of being self-demanding, ultimately leading to endeavours well done. "Because of this sense of detail, they have a true sense of the brands, they have a good sense of branding and excellent PR skills."

Pausing to reflect on his outward revelations, Prevot offers as a parting shot: "Quality requires honesty and self-control. Every job means an opportunity to learn new things, and work is always a continuous discovery of who I am. Work teaches you to be self-demanding; it is a means of self-improvement. A passion for products entails energy, or the power to be. Energy---this is one of the most fantastic qualities of people. It is the source of all dynamism in people."

There lies yet another revelation of L'Oreal's continued understanding of the ever-changing conception of beauty: a genuine belief that beyond a ravishing face lies the continued pursuit of seeking true inspiration in an exquisite, dynamic world.

Nurture Master

THE STEADY growth of L'Oréal in the Philippines is a product of teamwork and zest for challenge among its talented pool of personnel. Those who find themselves in this culturally diverse company, are in it for a real life adventure while learning the ropes of making it happen in the business of beauty.

So if you're plans include learning the business of global branding, look no further than L'Oreal, a company whose global performance has been both stellar and steady through the years. Last year alone, L'Oreal Group earned 14Billion euros in sales and continues its double digit growth in profit over the last 18 years. Represented by barely half of its brands in the Philippines; LOREAL PROFESSIONNEL, KERASTASE PARIS, GARNIER, LOREAL PARIS, MAYBELLINE NEW YORK, LANCOME, GIORGIO ARMANI and RALPH LAUREN (fragrances), CACHAREL, SHU UEMURA with its outstanding track record it is clear that the world's largest cosmetic company has more up its sleeve for the Philippines.

GETTING INTO L'OREAL

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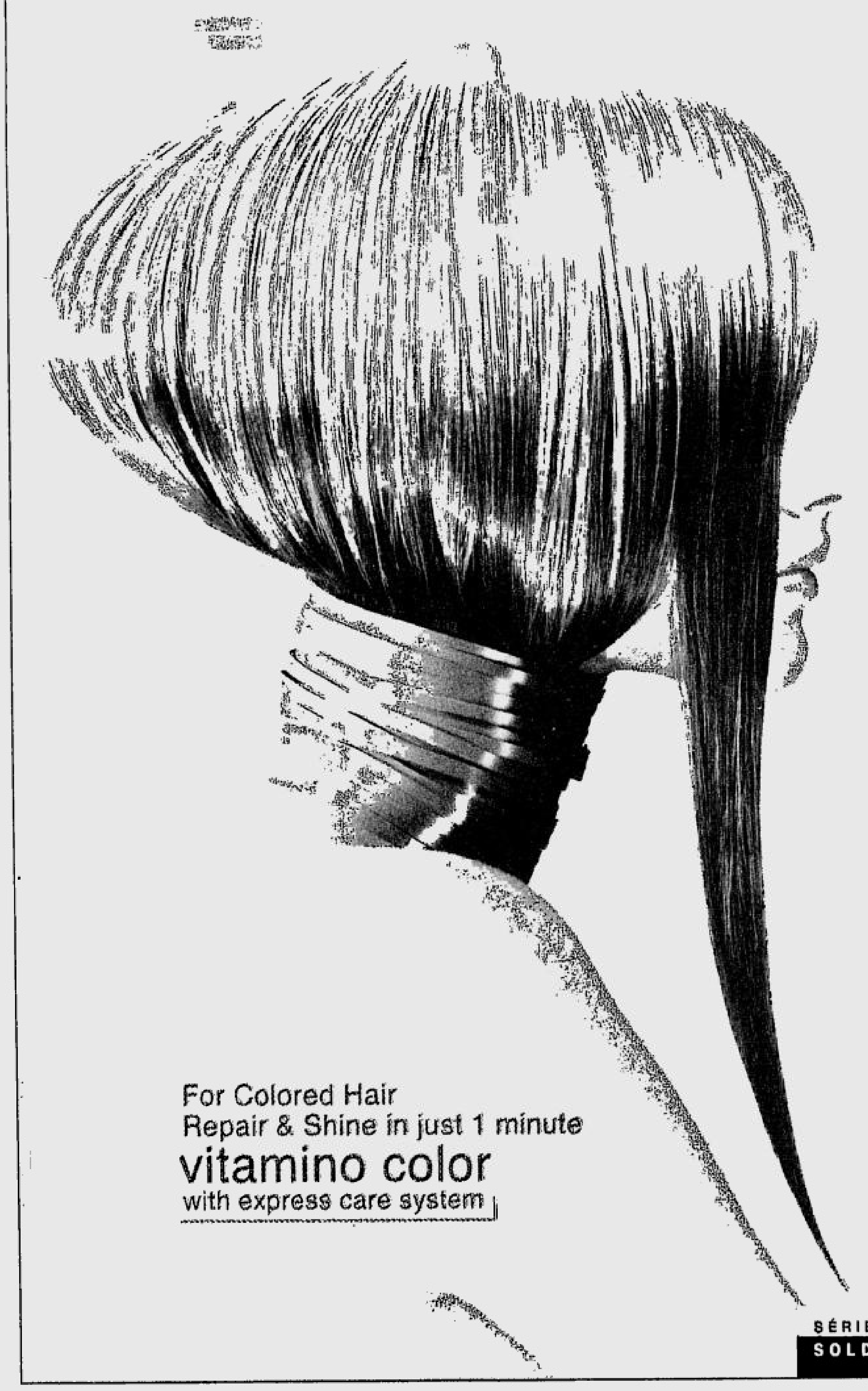
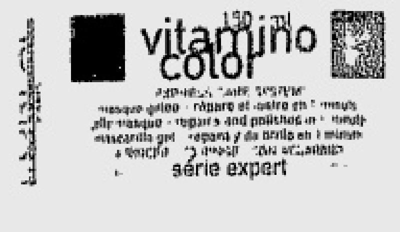
PAUL-Henri Duillet





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It's My Loreality

Qit Abola

General Manager
Administration and Finance Division (1 year and a half)

"THE FILIPINO can be world-class," says Qit Abola, General Manager for Administration & Finance.

Abola's assignments in Asia and the United States exposed him to international cultures and standards. In every place, he saw Filipinos exhibiting the ability to meet and exceed these standards.

And this was not limited to seasoned Filipino executives. "It was always a joy to observe many young Filipinos tackling and resolving issues with other nationalities on an equal basis," says Abola. "The added-value attributable to these 'kids' was always obvious and appreciated."

But despite a thriving international career, Qit Abola chose to come back home. He wants to raise his family in the Philippines. "In every country we were assigned, my family was always welcome. We were guests to wonderful hosts. But the prospect of raising and educating our kids outside of the Philippines was very difficult to even consider. So the choice between career and family was very easy to make."

The challenge to build a world-class organization from a small subsidiary "start-up" is what nudged him to join L'Oreal over other companies upon his return to the country. But beyond this challenge, Abola believes that sharing the same values with the company he is working for is very important. Remembering his initial conversation with L'Oreal executives before he was hired, Abola said L'Oreal values could be summarized in one word: respect. Respect for the country where they operate, for consumers, for employees, for our brands and for the shareholders. Those values, which are consistent with his own, are why he is now with L'Oreal.

"When there is a tough decision to make in the company we go back to the fundamentals... our values," said Abola who worked for 13 years in another global consumer products company before joining L'Oreal.

"Driving your car," an expression Abola picked up in L'Oreal, is an adequate metaphor of how they do things in the company. "It basically means taking responsibility for your actions." This does not mean working completely independent of everyone else; that would be chaos. Rather, it means delivering what is expected of you.

And the expectations are high. Successful companies in the cosmetics business constantly face high standards. These standards then cascade down from the company to its employees. Those who are able to anticipate, to learn and to change to meet these standards will be successful. "That's being world-class."

Rhea De Vera

Business Unit Manager
Lancome Paris (4 Years)

"FALL in love with your brand." This line aptly describes how passionate L'Oreal people are with their jobs.

Rhea de Vera who is currently in a short-term assignment in Singapore defines her job with L'Oreal as, "exciting, challenging, full of surprises and extremely fulfilling." Her current 'six month work-training assignment' allows her to learn hands-on brand management by working with a team from another country. This 'short-term assignment' is unique to L'Oreal. Not only does De Vera learn best practices from one of L'Oreal top Asian Luxury teams, she also gets a taste of life in another country. After this assignment, she will be able to share with her Philippine team effective real life business solutions, which no classroom lectures or degrees can ever equal.

In her five years with L'Oreal, she has come to learn the beauty business by heart. And why not, De Vera handled over three brands in all those years with the company. De Vera started as product manager for consumer division, handling Maybelline. This is where she was able to develop her marketing skills. Afterwards, she was assigned to the Luxury Products Division as business unit manager for RALPH LAUREN, GIORGIO ARMANI, CACHAREL and GUY LAROCHE (L'Oreal's fragrance brands). She considers her experience there as key learning years. De Vera had the opportunity to handle all aspects of the business, which included sales, marketing and finance.

Due to the fast pace and intense competitiveness that comprises the multi-billion dollar beauty industry De Vera cautions that, "Keeping cool is key especially when multiple deadlines and demanding quotas are being thrown at you. It becomes critical not to get distracted and stay focused."

De Vera's 'coolness under pressure' was tested earlier this year as she fought hard to hold onto the leadership of her fragrance brands when the category suffered a major decline this year. "For us (the team), what made the difference was the commitment, energy, and strong belief in our products," she said.

The youthful De Vera regards L'Oreal as a very dynamic and action-oriented company. "People tend to think it is all glamour, but we actually like to get our hands dirty," she said. "Because that is how we actually learn here." By getting their hands dirty this means, being constantly in touch with their products. De Vera makes it a point to know not only the facts and figures of her brands but the feel and scent of each of her products.

Many opportunities are available for people at L'Oreal, but they have to seek it out. An example of this is by networking with their global counterparts and sharing the best practices they have. "Why reinvent the wheel or the boat for that matter, early this year for the launch of POLO BLUE I chose not to build from scratch a 40 feet yacht but instead had one shipped from another country, as they had launched one month earlier." says De Vera.

In the end, says De Vera, "It boils down to no compromises, oftentimes it's too easy to opt for the fastest satisfactory solution, but not at L'Oreal, I can't count the number of time I have had suppliers work overtime repainting furniture on holidays-birthdays-vacations at the eleventh hour because the colour was not absolutely perfect. This may sound extreme but if you really love what you do, you won't think twice in going for that extra mile to make your business better-that's just another day at L'Oreal."

Evan P. Ragandang

Stock Control Manager
Consumer Division (8 Months)

IT WAS the desire to come back home that pushed Evan to leave a very promising career abroad. "I had to choose between being successful professionally abroad while being away from my loved ones and coming home to be happy," says Evan who joined L'Oreal as the Stock Control Manager for Consumer Division in March 2003. His position in other companies is also called Inventory Planning and Control Manager. His responsibility is supply optimisation,

His experience in another multinational company helped Evan adjust easily to the working environment in L'Oreal. It was all business primarily for him. His expertise with supply planning worked to his advantage given the inventory challenges he faced.

To help Ragandang meet his business objectives, he was sent to Singapore to train for one month in another L'Oreal subsidiary. As his goals were very challenging, L'Oreal

EVAN/ K4

POLO RALPH LAUREN BLUE

New Fragrance. New Classic.

The freedom of the big blue sky,
the energy of the open waters,
an invigorating blast of fresh air.
Cool fresh, warm spice.
A crystal blue sensation.
Let it wash over you.

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Evan P. Ragandang

From page K3

wanted to make sure he had the right know-how to deliver. It was a case of "putting money where your mouth is". The investment was worth it.

By the end of this year, his team will have reduced inventories by 33 percent. Already in November, they are at their best stock levels over the last two years. And they are on their way to breaking this benchmark. Strong ownership, coupled with good know-how support provided the fuel to achieving these results even within a short period.

I didn't expect that the experience to interact with my counterparts in Asia would be as helpful as it turned out," said Ragandang. He came home better equipped - having learned L'Oreal methods and resources. Networking and developing friendships across subsidiaries is also providing help in meeting his team's goals.

Of course, it was part of the expectation to come back and train the rest of the organization here in the Philippines," he said. As a small subsidiary, L'Oreal Philippines has to find creative ways of developing its people with the resources it has.

Hans Yao

Management Trainee (4 Months)

"*Bagay sa'yo* (It fits you)" was how Hans Yao's friends reacted upon learning that he was accepted as a management trainee in L'Oreal Philippines.

It may be sheer luck or plain destiny that this Ateneo-educated young man landed a job in a company that promotes beauty inside and out. Yao admitted with all honesty that he might be described as "vain." Or more aptly, just someone who knows the value of taking care of oneself.

I am a very beauty conscious person," the bubbly Yao said.

But it is not only his being in touch with his person why Yao is now with L'Oreal family. "On the whole I am very entrepreneurial," he said.

Entrepreneuralism is very evident in L'Oreal. This is how each department as well as the whole company evolves.

The drive to succeed fills the air in the company. One thing that Yao feels is something he shares with the company.

So far he finds his life in L'Oreal to be different and challenging. Why different? For a guy to be learning about cosmetics is something that is not so common in the society. His first two weeks in the company was all about learning anything and everything about cosmetics. "I have to know what is the difference between the water-based and washable mascara," he said.

Surprisingly, Yao, despite being a fresh graduate is given much responsibility, because aside from being a management trainee, Yao also functions as an account representative for the consumers products division for key clients. "Being in sales is a very challenging job," he said.

The biggest challenge that he has experienced so far is the transition from being a student to a significant player in a multinational company. He had to adjust to a new lifestyle, new setting, and new people. But it didn't deter him from having fun with his job.

So what led him to choose work in a cosmetic company vs. other industries?

I dare to be different," he said. "I don't follow status quo."

University ties

THE MOST important asset in any business is its people. Bearing this in mind it is easy to understand why multinational companies invest a lot of money in their recruitment strategies.

When you step into the L'Oreal Office, it is difficult not to feel the energy emanating from the people. This dynamic mix is the result of careful assessment of the personal qualities of those that want to be part of the L'Oreal Corporate Office. In recruiting, we look for certain qualities, people who are innovative, entrepreneurial, leaders, achievers and have something extra special, which we call the "métier". A familiar word to those who work in L'Oreal, this means having a sensitivity to beauty, an eye and deep concern for top quality, being open to diversity and being in touch with the contemporary lifestyles and trends. And how do we find these people? For the most part by investing a lot in activities that involve universities. Letting students get to know L'Oreal and what it has to offer.

University Partnership

In L'Oreal, wherein 2/3 of the executive recruits are below 30 years old, the most important strategy would be "University Partnership". L'Oreal has roughly 450 University Partnerships in 45 countries.

The Strategies

Aside from Career days of the Universities and Corporate Presentations that gives the company the opportunity to meet with students directly, the activity that is the best is The Internship program which is carried out in majority of L'Oreal offices worldwide. Students actually get a "feel" of the work environment, getting to do the work hands-on.

L'Oreal Business Games

The company also has the L'Oreal Business Games. The objective is to use them as personalized contact with the young people internationally and help them discover L'Oreal and the beauty business world

L'Oreal Marketing Award is a creative interactive marketing competition for undergraduate students in their last two years of university. Students are given the opportunity to put themselves in the shoes of an international marketing brand manager for one of the L'Oreal signatures and develop new marketing strategies.

The "E-Strat Challenge" is an on-line business and strategy competition. It gives students the opportunity to put themselves in the virtual driver's seat of a leading global cosmetic company. This was initiated in 2001 in partnership with StratX, a leader in training and business simulations. This online game allows students from our local universities to interact with other students from around the world, making it very challenging and highly competitive. The team achieving the highest share price index value wins.

In the Philippines ...

L'Oreal is actively working with the top universities such as Ateneo De Manila University, De La Salle University, and the University of the Philippines. From job fairs, campus events, company presentations to giving seminars on proper, grooming. L'Oreal Philippines gives MBA scholarship grants to students based on their academic reputation. This year, two deserving women were chosen: Richie Alayan and Beth Nicolas, both from the University of the Philippines. Filipino students have been involved with the E-Strat Challenge since the year 2001 and although we have yet to win the top award, we have definitely put our mark on the map.

PAUL-Henri Duillet (center) with 2003 UP MBA scholars, Beth Nicolas and Richie Alayan

For any further details or inquiries, please email us at recruitment@ph.loreal.com

Nurture Master

From page K2

sail within the larger fleet of L'OREAL GROUP. In short, no matter how small your boat is each member of the crew plays an essential role in making sure the boat stays on course.

Hence on day of one of your career in L'Oréal, expect to be put in a position where people will be listening to what you have to say. New recruits are expected to speak-up and give their assessment of a situation. Once in L'Oreal expect to jump right into the job and interact.

EMPOWERMENT

The feeling of being in charge is empowering in itself, said Duillet who has been with the global leader in cosmetics for over two decades. "You have to be charismatic enough to make things happen, to be able to generate a sense of adventure in L'Oréal," he said.

Naturally empowerment entails some risks and no matter how hard people try, they are bound to make mistakes. Accepting you made a mistake is one thing, the ability to digest feedback is the other side of this. Both play a significant role in enriching the entrepreneurial mentality in the company. "People should be able to accept mistakes and work on how to compensate them as soon as possible in the best interest of the company," Duillet said. L'Oreal encourages people to experiment with new ideas and take 'calculated' risks-in this company, people who dare to dream are encouraged.

BUILD ON DREAMS WITH FACTS

Dreaming is one thing but Duillet advises all incoming managers to also practice being rigorous in their approach. Always double check your facts. There may be times when consumer feedback is not what you expect it to be. If the market says it is blue, then blue it is." Says Duillet.

Quick and accurate gathering of experience is critical to be able to contribute. To do so, constant exchange with peers and superiors within the organization is expected. Furthermore, thanks to its networking facilities (intranet, regional meetings) sharing of best practices (including learnings from previous mistakes) is promoted.

"Everywhere, everyday-be curious. L'Oreal people need to be in touch with the world, and more specifically with their counterparts in other countries." Duillet adds. It is the ability to work within a network organization which matters at all levels.

NURTURING TALENTS

Coaching, or in Duillet's words nurturing, allows one's career in L'Oreal to prosper in more ways than expected.

With this premise, the regional training center of the company in Singapore, was set up to tap individual talents. "The Management Development Central (MDC) helps to train people for a new task or specialize further on their current one," Duillet explained. "And all this in having a career develop harmoniously." The point is in L'Oreal you become part of an organization in constant evolution that provides its people opportunities for different and greater empowerment everyday.

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DERMO-EXPERTISE

Knock out imperfections in 3 steps for pure skin... non-stop!

PURE ZONE
CONTINUOUS PURITY

New 1ST CONTINUOUS ACTION PURIFYING PROGRAMME

1 Cleanses skin deeply, clears impurities, excess sebum and dead cells.
2 Clarifies, tightens pores and dries out imperfections.
3 Regulates sebum production to prevent skin regreasing and moisturizes throughout the day.

Innovative combination of:
Salicylic Acid: for its exfoliating and purifying power.
Sebo-Calmyl™: for its sebo-regulating and soothing action.

Step 1 CLEANSE & PURIFY
Step 2 CLARIFY & TIGHTEN PORES
Step 3 REGULATE & MOISTURIZE
SPECIAL CARE
PURE ZONE
DEEP PURIFYING GEL
PURIFYING CLARIFYING TONER
OIL FREE
World Dermatology Congress PARIS 2002
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DERMO-EXPERTISE.
FROM RESEARCH TO BEAUTY.

BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT.

FROM 15 YEARS OLD, CONTINUOUS PURITY.

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